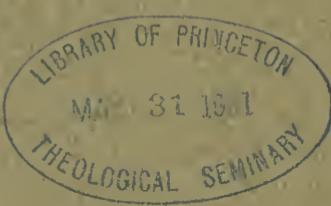


A History of the  
Mennonite Conference of  
Virginia and Its Work

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# A History of the Mennonite Conference of Virginia and Its Work



With a Brief  
Biographical Sketch of Its Founders and Organizers

As arranged and formulated by a Committee  
Appointed Especially for this Work

By the Conference Session held at the Warwick River Church, May 13th and 14th, 1910

*Printed by the*

MENNONITE PUBLISHING HOUSE  
SCOTTDALE - - - - - PENN'A.  
1910

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Virginia Conference

OCT 11 1910  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

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## COMPILER'S PREFACE—1910.

The subjoined history of "The Mennonite Conference of Virginia and its Work, and the Biographical Sketch of its Founders and Organizers" is herewith given with the view of committing to imperishable record the simple yet strenuous lives of the pioneer Mennonites who laid the foundation of the church in the state of Virginia and made it possible for establishing the conference as we now have it—a precious heritage—handed down by them to us through the three or four generations that have succeeded them.

To the present generation the circumstance seems remarkable that fully 100 years of pioneer work in the church had to be passed over before the ministerial forces in Virginia ripened into a conference. Yet when we realize that the trials, privations and hindrances to Christian progress in those early days were perhaps ten to one to what they are now, their situation may be all the more appreciated and understood. It is evident also that long before the conference was organized in 1835, that ministers and deacons frequently met for consultation on vital subjects bearing on the common welfare of the church. Besides, they were in great part dependent through all these years upon the fostering care of the Lancaster Conference in Pennsylvania.

During this formative period, it is known that bishops, ministers and deacons, from the very moment they were called and ordained to their respective offices felt most keenly the responsibility and obligation placed upon them. The peculiar environment of the new country in which they lived, together with the ennobling qualities of character that their calling enjoined, caused them to realize to the fullest degree what it meant to live and preach a whole gospel and everywhere testify for Christ and his cause.

With such convictions as to a faithful performance of their duty, and the clear lucid and impressive style of the German language in which they expounded the Word of God, could not be otherwise than have a most salutary effect upon the church and its future prosperity.

LEWIS J. HEATWOLE,  
C. H. BRUNK,  
CHRISTIAN GOOD,

} Committee.

## A REGISTER OF BISHOPS

Who have served within the Bounds of the Virginia Conference.

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Remarks
Henry Shank	Jan. 1, 1758		Oct. 10, 1836	
Henry Rhodes	Nov. 2, 1748		Mar. 18, 1827	
Peter Burkholder	Aug. 27, 1783	1837	Dec. 27, 1846	
Daniel Good	Nov. 16, 1781		Feb. 1850	Lower Dist.
Michael Stauffer				Upper "
Samuel Shank	Oct. 12, 1790		Feb. 26, 1863	Lower "
John Geil	Jan. 22, 1799		Oct. 19, 1889	Lower "
Martin Burkholder	Feb. 7, 1817		Dec. 18, 1860	Middle "
Jacob Hildebrand	Oct. 28, 1816		Feb. 15, 1899	Upper "
Samuel Coffman	Jun. 2, 1822	Jul. 1861	Aug. 28, 1894	Middle "
Abraham Shank	Oct. 16, 1829	Sep. 5, 1875	Jun. 22, 1901	Lower "
Joseph N. Driver	Mar. 14, 1845	May 12, 1888	Aug. 9, 1890	Upper "
Anth'y P. Heatwole	Apr. 23, 1855	Dec. 3, 1891		Upper "
Lewis J. Heatwole	Dec. 4, 1852	May 2, 1892		Middle "
Lewis Shank	Dec. 24, 1855	Aug. 25, 1901		Lower "
Joseph D. Wert			Jul. 22, 1908	Norfolk "
George R. Brunk	Dec. 31, 1871			Warwick "

## A REGISTER OF MINISTERS

Who have served within the Bounds of the Virginia Conference.

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Remarks
Michael Kaufman	Jun. 21, 1714		Dec. 21, 1788	Page Co.
Jacob Strickler				Page "
— Stauffer				Shenand'h "
— Graybill				Shenand'h "
*John Rhodes			Aug. 1766	Page "
Henry Funk				Rocking'm "
John Baer	Jun. 22, 1774		Aug. 1, 1848	Rocking'm "
Henry Shank	Jan. 1, 1758		Oct. 10, 1836	Rocking'm "
Henry Rhodes	Nov. 2, 1748		Mar. 18, 1827	Rocking'm "
Peter Burkholder	Aug. 27, 1783	Oct. 27, 1805	Dec. 27, 1846	Rocking'm "
Christ Coffman				Greenbrier "
John Fauber				Augusta "
Michael Stauffer				Augusta "
Abrah'm Niswander	May 19, 1774		Aug. 31, 1846	Rocking'm "
Frederick Rhodes	Jun. 13, 1769		Jun. 21, 1847	Rocking'm "
Daniel Good	Nov. 16, 1781	1820	Feb. 1850	Lower Dist.
Isaac Roadcap				Middle "
John Shank				Lower "
Benjamin Wenger	Apr. 28, 1781	1826	Feb. 26, 1865	Middle "

\*Killed by Indians.

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Remarks
David Burkholder		1820		Middle "
Samuel Shank	Oct. 12, 1790	1846	Feb. 26, 1864	Lower "
John Geil	Jan. 22, 1799	1840	Oct. 19, 1889	Lower "
Martin Kendig				Upper "
David Rhodes	Jul. 6, 1808	1841	Oct. 6, 1859	Middle "
Daniel Showalter	Jan. 1, 1802		Jun. 1, 1889	Lower "
Martin Burkholder	Feb. 17, 1817	Oct. 26, 1839	Dec. 18, 1860	Middle "
John Weaver	Jul. 25, 1818	1843	Apr. 8, 1877	Middle "
David Showalter	Dec. 13, 1808	1844	Mar. 25, 1867	Middle "
Jacob Hildebrand	Oct. 28, 1816	1845	Feb. 15, 1899	Upper "
Abraham Wenger				Upper "
Isaac Groves	May 16, 1820	Jul. 1849	May 25, 1899	Upper "
Samuel Coffman	Jun. 2, 1822	Jul. 1852	Aug. 26, 1894	Middle "
Jacob Driver	Jan. 25, 1830	Dec. 20, 1856	Nov. 22, 1877	Middle "
Daniel Heatwole	Feb. 9, 1825	Jan. 26, 1857	May 10, 1894	Middle "
Peter Shoemaker	Sep. 12, 1822		Feb. 20, 1876	Middle Dist.
Christian Brunk	Feb. 13, 1823	Jul. 24, 1859	Dec. 3, 1906	Winch'st'r "
David H. Landis		Jul. 31, 1859	Dec. 14, 1906	Middle "
John Evers	1834	Jul. 31, 1859	Jan. 12, 1878	Middle "
Abraham Shank	Oct. 16, 1829	Aug. 1864	Jun. 22, 1901	Lower "
Samuel Shank	Jan. 16, 1828		Apr. 30, 1901	Lower "
Joseph N. Driver	Mar. 14, 1845		Aug. 9, 1890	Upper "
Henry Heatwole	Aug. 12, 1845	Jul. 1869	Dec. 6, 1873	Middle "
Gabriel Heatwole	Dec. 4, 1834	Dec. 5, 1870		Whisler Bre.
Jacob R. Hildebrand	Oct. 13, 1819		Dec. 6, 1908	Upper Dist.
Solomon Beery	Oct. 25, 1832	Jul. 18, 1875	Dec. 11, 1905	Middle "
John S. Coffman	Oct. 16, 1848	Jul. 18, 1875	Jul. 22, 1899	Middle "
Abram Burkholder	Jan. 4, 1850	Jul. 15, 1877		Middle "
Peter S. Heatwole	May 24, 1843	Aug. 18, 1878		Middle "
Sem. S. Weaver	Feb. 15, 1847	Aug. 18, 1878		Middle "
George Brunk	Jan. 29, 1831	Jan. 1874		Lower "
John Geil	Feb. 27, 1830	Sep. 5, 1875	Jul. 28, 1900	Lower "
Jos. F. Heatwole	Sep. 14, 1849	Jul. 25, 1880	Sep. 30, 1903	Middle "
Abram B. Wenger	Jun. 13, 1839	Jul. 25, 1880	Jul. 14, 1896	Middle "
Daniel Mellinger	Jun. 26, 1826	Jun. 1875		Winch'st'r "
Lewis Shank	Dec. 24, 1855	Dec. 16, 1883		Lower "
Henry Wenger	Feb. 14, 1856	Dec. 16, 1883		Lower "
Anthony Heatwole	Apr. 23, 1855	Jun. 26, 1887		Upper "
Jos. Harshbarger	Oct. 12, 1855	Jun. 26, 1887	Oct. 7, 1905	Upper "
Christian Good	Sep. 3, 1842	Jun. 26, 1887		Middle "
Lewis J. Heatwole	Dec. 4, 1852	Jun. 26, 1887		Middle "
Jacob Teats				W. Va. "
Jacob Bowers	Sep. 1850	Jun. 1892		Winch'st'r "
Jacob Martin	Apr. 4, 1840	Dec. 28, 1890	May 4, 1909	Upper "
Erasmus Shank	Jan. 2, 1861	Dec. 28, 1890		Upper "
Simeon Heatwole	Jan. 26, 1832	Jan. 1, 1891		Whisler Bre.
Emanuel Heatwole	Dec. 22, 1854	Jan. 1, 1891		Whisler Bre.
Jos. W. Geil	Oct. 8, 1858	Jan. 12, 1896		Lower "
J. Snively Martin	Oct. 14, 1866	Apr. 14, 1896		Middle Dist.
Isaac B. Wenger	Aug. 31, 1867	Apr. 14, 1896	Jul. 7, 1896	Middle "
Martin W. Brunk	Apr. 14, 1851	Aug. 20, 1899	Oct. 1907	Upper "

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Remarks
Edward J. Berkey		Jun. 17, 1900		Fauquier "
Daniel Shenk	Sep. 27, 1853	Sep. 30, 1900		Warwick "
Perry Shank		Aug. 25, 1901		Lower "
Geo. W. Showalter	Sep. 1857	Aug. 25, 1901		Lower "
Samuel H. Rhodes	Mar. 24, 1880	Jan. 3, 1902		Middle Dist.
Jacob A. Heatwole	Sep. 28, 1871	Jan. 3, 1902		Middle "
Henry H. Good	Jan. 19, 1850	Oct. 30, 1880	Oct. 10, 1908	Halifax "
Joseph Shank		Jan. 1, 1905		Lower "
Joseph D. Wert		Sep. 17, 1905		Norfolk "
Robert L. Smith	1861	Sep. 24, 1905		Randolph "
Jos. W. Coffman	Feb. 19, 1857	Aug. 11, 1907		Middle "
J. Earl Suter	Feb. 7, 1887	Aug. 11, 1907		Middle "
Etter F. Heatwole	May 8, 1879	Sep. 1, 1907		Upper "
Elam Horst		Dec. 2, 1906		Halifax "
Henry B. Keener		Oct. 10, 1908		Randolph "
Gabriel H. Brunk		Jun. 13, 1909		Halifax "
Amos D. Wenger	Nov. 25, 1867	Nov. 11, 1894		Norfolk "
Geo. R. Brunk	Dec 31, 1871			Warwick "
Jacob Hahn				Warwick "
Isaac D. Hertzler				Warwick "
Melvin J. Heatwole	Dec. 10, 1878	Aug. 28, 1910		Middle "
Amos D. Heatwole	Jul. 18, 1879	Aug. 28, 1910		Middle "

## A REGISTER OF DEACONS

Who have served within the Bounds of the Virginia Conference.

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Remarks
David Heatwole	1767		Apr. 8, 1842	Middle Dist.
Anthony Rhodes	Mar. 21, 1789		May 4, 1877	Lower "
Samuel Shank	Oct. 12, 1790		Feb. 26, 1863	Lower "
Joseph Wenger	Sep. 17, 1794		Feb. 14, 1865	Lower "
Samuel Rhodes	Jun. 3, 1797		Jun. 6, 1832	Lower "
Jacob Good	Dec. 18, 1806	1853	Apr. 28, 1900	Lower "
Benjamin Wenger	May 23, 1811	1841	Jul. 9, 1880	Middle "
Frederick Weaver	Feb. 14, 1820	1842	Oct. 8, 1851	Middle "
Fred A Rhodes	Feb. 22, 1819	1852	Feb. 12, 1900	Middle "
Peter Blosser	Dec. 31, 1831	Jan. 26, 1857	Nov. 23, 1904	Lower "
John Groves		1842	1865	Upper "
Peter Layman		1842		Upper "
Jacob Geil	Aug. 31, 1828	Jul. 24, 1860		Lower "
Jacob Landis	Jun. 15, 1823	1863	Sep. 10, 1898	Upper "
Jac. R. Hildebrand	Oct. 13, 1819	1863	Feb. 15, 1909	Upper "
Simeon Heatwole	Jan. 26, 1832			Whisler Or'r
Michael Shank	Jul. 15, 1829	Aug. 18, 1870	Jun. 26, 1905	Middle Dist.
Daniel H. Good	Nov. 11, 1843	Aug. 18, 1870	Jul. 16, 1895	Middle "

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Remarks
Daniel Mellinger	Jun. 26, 1826			Winch'st'r "
Jacob W. Showalter	Sep. 4, 1847			Middle "
David E. Rhodes		Jan. 21, 1883		Whisler Or'r
Christian Good	Sep. 3, 1842	Jan. 21, 1883		Middle Dist.
Samuel Weaver	Jul. 24, 1855	Sep. 14, 1879	Mar. 7, 1904	Upper "
Anth'y P. Heatwole	Apr. 23, 1855	Dec. 27, 1885		Upper "
Martin W. Brunk	Apr. 14, 1851	Dec. 27, 1885	Oct. 1800	Upper "
Christian Shank	May 26, 1838	Sep. 21, 1884		Lower "
John Whitner				Winch'st'r "
Faro Wilkins				W. Va. "
Elias Brunk	Jul. 2, 1856	Jun. 14, 1891		Middle Dist.
Reuben S. Rhodes	May 26, 1858	Jun. 14, 1891		Whisler Bre.
Isaac Groves	Nov. 23, 1851	Dec. 29, 1895		Upper Dist.
Christian Ebersole	Nov. 11, 1843	Oct. 16, 1898		Winch'st'r "
Sam. M. Burkholder	May 16, 1848	Apr. 16, 1899		Middle "
Henry Blosser	Aug. 21, 1853	Apr. 16, 1899		Middle "
Henry L. Rhodes		Dec. 10, 1899		Fauquier "
Timothy Wenger	Feb. 18, 1864	Sep. 2, 1900		Norfolk "
Benj. Brenneman	Sep. 27, 1855	Mar. 9, 1893		Warwick "
David S. Geil	Nov. 25, 1862	Jan. 1, 1905		Lower "
John J. Wenger	Nov. 16, 1866	Jan. 1, 1905		Lower "
Fred A. Driver	Aug. 3, 1870	Aug. 6, 1905		Upper "
Abram P. Shank	Feb. 15, 1862	Jul. 22, 1905		Warwick "
Osborne Wyat		Aug. 23, 1908		Randolph "
Isaac W. Eby				Norfolk "
Eli Kauffman		Jun. 13, 1909		Halifax "
French H. White		Sep. 19, 1909		Rando'h Mis
Clayton G. Bergey				Nor'lk Dist.

## A REGISTER OF DEACONESESSES

Who have served within the Bounds of the Virginia Conference.

Name	Born	Died	Remarks
Elizabeth Rhodes	Feb. 10, 1789	Aug. 23, 1880	Middle Dist.
Magdalena Rhodes	Dec. 2, 1810	Mar. 12, 1898	Middle "
Rebecca Burkholder	Mar. 9, 1821	Aug. 30, 1900	Middle "
Elizabeth Hartman	Oct. 11, 1815	Oct. 11, 1888	Middle "
Elizab'th Showalter	Jan. 20, 1831		Middle "
Annie Brunk	Jun. 6, 1889	Mar. 19, 1889	Middle "
Sarah Sharpes	Feb. 3, 1839		Middle "
Magdalene Rhodes	Jan. 20, 1820	Jul. 22, 1884	Middle "
Susanna Brunk	Dec. 13, 1843		Middle "
Fannie Driver	Mar. 5, 1846		Upper "
Fannie Heatwole	May 11, 1850		Middle "
Sarah Coffman	Dec. 19, 1859		Middle "
Marietta Detweiler	Oct. 9, 1866		Middle "
Elizabeth Brunk	Apr. 19, 1857		Middle "
Annie Branneman	Oct. 7, 1858		Warwick "
Mattie Shank.			Lower "

**NAMES OF BRETHREN FROM OTHER STATES WHO HAVE LATER  
BECOME MINISTERS IN THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE**

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Place
Jacob Martin	Apr. 4, 1840	Dec. 28, 1890	May 4, 1909	Maryland
J. Snively Martin	Oct. 14, 1866	Apr. 14, 1896		Maryland
Edward J. Berkey		Jun. 17, 1900		Indiana
Daniel Shenk	Sep. 27, 1853	Sep. 30, 1900		Ohio
Elam Horst		Dec. 2, 1906		Ohio
Jacob Hahn				Michigan
Isaac D. Hertzler		Sep. 17, 1905		Maryland
Joseph D. Wert		Oct. 10, 1908		Pennsylv'nia
Henry B. Keener		Nov. 11, 1894		Maryland
Amos D. Wenger	Nov. 26, 1867			Missouri
Gabriel H. Brunk		Jun. 13, 1909		Ohio
Geo. R. Brunk	Dec. 31, 1871			Kansas

**NAMES OF BRETHREN FROM OTHER STATES WHO HAVE LATER  
BECOME DEACONS IN THE VIRGINIA CONFRENCE**

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Place
Samuel Weaver	Jul. 24, 1855	Sep. 14, 1859	Mar. 7, 1904	Penn'a
Daniel Mellinger	Jun. 26, 1826			Penn'a
Christian Ebersole	Nov. 11, 1843	Oct. 16, 1898		Penn'a
Benja'in Brenneman	Sep. 27, 1855	Mar. 9, 1893		Ohio
Abram P. Shenk	Feb. 15, 1862	Jul. 22, 1906		Ohio
Eli Kauffman		Jun. 13, 1909		Missouri
Isaac W. Eby				Maryland
Clayton Bergey				Penn'a

**NAMES OF BRETHREN FROM VIRGINIA WHO HAVE BEEN  
CALLED TO THE MINISTRY IN OTHER CONFERENCES**

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Place
Joseph Weaver		1860		Oron'go, Mo
Daniel F. Driver		1860		Versail's, Mo
Henry H. Good	Jan. 19, 1850	Oct. 30, 1880	Oct. 10, 1908	Elida, O.
Daniel S. Brunk		Jul. 1, 1888		Elida, O.
Philip H. Parret	Aug. 30, 1842	May 1872	May 15, 1905	Cha'bs'g, Pa
Perry Brunk				Elida, O.
Samuel E. Good	Jan. 27, 1878	Jul. 10, 1904		Sterling, Ill.
Aaron C. Good	Jun. 25, 1881	Feb. 25, 1906		Sterling, Ill.
Perry J. Blosser		Sep. 22, 1907		S. Engl'h, Ia

**NAMES OF BRETHREN FROM VIRGINIA WHO HAVE BEEN  
CALLED TO BE DEACONS IN OTHER CONFERENCES**

Name	Born	Ordained	Died	Place
John C. Driver		1892		Versail's, Mo.
Henry G. Powell				Elida, O.
Daniel H. Coffinan	Apr. 4, 1859	Mar. 9, 1893		Elkhart, Ind.
Pery Brunk				Elida, O.
Martin Blosser			Apr. 20, 1909	Conc'rd, Ten.
Samuel C. Brunk	Feb. 1, 1857	May 21, 1905		Elida, O.

**BRETHREN WHO HAVE SERVED AS MODERATOR IN THE  
VIRGINIA CONFERENCE**

Name	Born	Appointed	Died	District
Michael Shank	Jul. 15, 1829	Oct. 10, 1870	Jun. 25, 1905	Middle
Joseph N. Driver	Mar. 14, 1845	Apr. 14, 1886	Aug. 9, 1890	Upper
Samuel Shank	Jan. 16, 1838	Oct. 7, 1887	Apr. 30, 1900	Lower
Daniel S. Heatwole	Feb. 9, 1825	Oct. 2, 1885	May 30, 1894	Middle
Christian Good	Sep. 3, 1842	May 13, 1892		Middle
A. B. Burkholder	Jan. 4, 1850	May 13, 1904		Middle

**BRETHREN WHO HAVE SERVED AS SECRETARY IN THE  
VIRGINIA CONFERENCE**

Name	Born	Appointed	Died	District
Fred A. Rhodes	Feb. 22, 1819		Feb. 12, 1900	Middle
Jac. R. Hildebrand	Oct. 13, 1819	Apr. 28, 1864	Feb. 15, 1909	Upper
David H. Landis		Oct. 3, 1884	Dec. 14, 1906	Middle
Emanuel Suter	Mar. 26, 1833	Oct. 14, 1886	Dec. 16, 1902	Middle
S. M. Burkholder	May 16, 1848	Oct. 5, 1894		Middle
Chr. H. Brunk	Nov. 8, 1845	May 11, 1900		Middle

**SECRETARY'S PROTEM**

John R. Suter	Feb. 24, 1862	Oct. 6, 1893	Middle
Amos D. Wenger	Nov. 25, 1867	Oct. 7, 1898	Middle
Clement D. Wenger	Nov. 23, 1874	Oct. 13, 1905	Middle

**NAMES OF BRETHREN WHO WERE APPOINTED AS SINGING  
CLERK OR CHORISTER IN THE VIRGINIA CONGREGATIONS**

Name	Born	Appointed	Died	Place
*Christian Funk			Jul. 15, 1857	Trissels
Abraham Funk				Trissels
Joseph Funk			Dec. 25, 1862	Brannemans
Joseph Wenger	Sep. 17, 1794		Feb. 14, 1865	Brannemans
Christly Funk				Bank
Michael Showalter	Feb. 15, 1831		Oct. 17, 1905	Trissels
Abram Burkholder				Weavers
David A. Heatwole	Mar. 9, 1827			Weavers
Peter Shoemaker	Sep. 12, 1822		Feb. 20, 1876	Hildebrands
Jacob Wenger	Jun. 4, 1829		Jul. 22, 1879	Brannemans
Abram Niswander	May 19, 1874		Aug. 31, 1846	Pike
Michael Shank	Jul. 15, 1829		Jun. 26, 1905	Pike
Christian Good	Sep. 3, 1842			Bank
Christian Shank				Bank
Samuel Brunk	Jan. 8, 1843			Weavers
John S. Coffman	Oct. 16, 1848		Jul. 22, 1899	Bank
Daniel H. Coffman	Apr. 4, 1859			Bank
Gabriel D Rhodes	May 27, 1846			Bank
Martin A. Layman	May 22, 1854		Oct. 8, 1904	Mt. Clinton
Noah Blosser	Jan. 1, 1851	1894		Mt. Clinton
Joseph Geil	Oct. 8, 1858	1894		Brannemans
Joseph Shank				Trissels
Martin Brunk	Apr. 14, 1851		Oct. 1907	Springdale
John H. Brunk				Brennemans
Perry Blosser				Pike
Jacob Hildebrand				Hildebrands
Joseph H. Good	Mar. 22, 1865			Bank
Noah Showalter				Zion
Melvin Heatwole	Dec. 10, 1878	Apr. 11, 1907		Dry River
Joseph Burkholder	Jan. 6, 1882	Jul. 9, 1910		Pike
Zebedee Roadcap				Gospel Hill

\*Stricken while leading the singing at church and died before reaching home.

## A GLANCE IN RETROSPECT.

An analysis of the preceding tabulated list shows that from the primitive beginnings of the Mennonite Church in Shenandoah and Page Counties up to what it is at the present time,—the Virginia Conference has had associated with it seventeen bishops, eighty-nine ministers and thirty-six deacons; making a total of one-hundred-and-thirty-five persons who have within the period of 180 years been called of God and set apart for special service in the church. Besides all these, there have been sixteen sisters appointed to the office of deaconess—an order recognized for 100 years or more among the Virginia congregations, that assigns to the sister so appointed, such duties among the sisterhood, that are not suitable for a deacon to attend to.

When the first conference was held in 1835 the body of the church had one bishop, nine ministers and four deacons in service where there were six regular places of worship—The Brush, Branneman's, Weavers, Moyers' (Pike), Hildebrands and Kendigs, (now Springdale).

In the year 1840 there were three bishops, six ministers and three deacons, with a possible membership of 250, distributed to seven regular places of worship—preaching then held at the new place called Crawfords Chapel.

In the year 1860 there were three bishops, twelve ministers and six deacons. The steady increase in membership through all these years was balanced off by yearly emmigration of our people to Ohio and other states of the West. There were then eight places of worship.

In the year 1884 there were four bishops, twenty ministers and twelve deacons, with a membership all told of about 600, who attended preaching at eleven places of worship. These were the Brush (Trissels), New Dale, Zion and Brannemans in Lower district; Weavers, Mt. Clinton, Bank and Pike in Middle district; and Mt. Pleasant, Hildebrands and Kindigs in Upper district.

At the present time, (1910) there are five bishops, 25 ministers and 22 deacons (total 52); with a membership all told of 1253 and 18 meeting houses owned exclusively by Mennonites and four others that are owned jointly with other denominations.

It will also be of interest to the general reader to note that the Virginia Conference as a legislative body covers the period of 75 years, and embraces the work of not less than 125 sessions.

By looking over the index of subjects treated, it will be seen that in this time almost every possible phase of Christian duty and service has been considered and passed upon. The instances of negative and positive action, being rather in the majority over all measures that are of an advisory or suggestive nature, shows that the conference, throughout its entire history, has proven itself a most valued safeguard for preserving, if not its primitive purity, at least the identity of the Mennonite church in Virginia; and future generations of its bishops, ministers and deacons may profit greatly by making the work of their predecessors, a lifetime study.

### A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE FOUNDERS AND ORGANIZERS OF THE VIRGINIA CONFERENCE

The earliest authentic record preserved to the present generation that gives account of the beginning of the Mennonite church in Virginia and its conference, is that which appears with the establishing of the Massanutton colony on the Shenandoah river in year 1727.

In Palmer's Calendar of State Papers, Volume I, page 219—229 as quoted by Dr. John W. Wayland in "**The German Element in the Shenandoah Valley**," pages 73, 41 and 118, appears the name of Michael Kauffman, who, along with seven others, signed a petition in the year 1733 asking protection of acting Governor Gooch of Virginia in their rights as landholders in the settlement then known as "Massanutting" in Page County, Virginia.

The said Michael Kauffman is to all intents to be identified with the minister of that name who in later years located west of the Massanutton mountain in the Linyville Creek section of Rockingham County and who, so far as known is the first Mennonite who preached in Virginia.

His remains now lie buried in the old graveyard of the Lindale church near Edom, Rockingham county, the German characters on the headstone of his grave show that he was born June 21st, 1714 and died December 21st, 1788. These dates readily indicate that he lived in the same generation with Adam Miller, the founder of the first German settlement in the Shenandoah Valley. The traditional account is also given in Dr. Wayland's book, page 40, that Adam Miller and his comrades all came from Lancaster county, Pa., by way of Chesapeake Bay, crossed the country and passed through Swift Run Gap in the Blue Ridge to the Shenandoah River by the same route that Governor Spottswood and his cavaliers came in the year 1716.

Mention is made of another Mennonite minister in connection with this colony by the name of Jacob Strickler, who in the year 1731 is said to have established his home near the site where the town of Luray is located.

In the year 1754 a strong colony of Mennonites located on the North Fork of the Shenandoah river near what is now Woodstock. These people, it would appear, came here from Pennsylvania by way of the Cumberland Valley across the Maryland border, to Virginia. Two ministers by the name of Stauffer and Graybill preached regularly here, while still later, mention is made by Samuel Kercheval, on page 91 of his book, "**The History of the Valley**" of a Mennonite minister, John Rhodes, who in the latter part of August of the year 1766, with four members of his family—wife and three sons, were killed by the Indians and their home burnt to ashes. His daughter Elizabeth, carrying her baby sister in her arms escaped to the barn and later by flight through a field of tall hemp to the river which she crossed in safety. This awful tragedy took place on the Shenandoah river in Page county some miles below Luray. The circumstances of the daughter's escape, and the burning of the buildings by the Indians was witnessed by the Stauffer family who lived on the opposite side of the river.

In the year 1775, Henry Funk, another Mennonite minister reached the Shenandoah Valley from Pennsylvania and located near what is now Turleytown in Rockingham county, where the first permanent colony of Mennonites was established in Virginia, all the others in Shenandoah and Page counties having in time become extinct.

The ministers Henry Shank and Henry Rhodes succeeded Henry Funk in the period extending from 1790 to 1800 and later, while John Fauber and

Michael Stauffer served congregations established at about the same time in Augusta county, at Hildebrands and Kendigs.

Up until this time all ministers and deacons residing in Virginia appear to have been ordained in Pennsylvania, and it seems that all matters of organization and oversight were vested in the Lancaster county, Pa., conference: In short the church in Virginia was regarded but as the southern arm extending from the central or parent body of Mennonites in America.

Minister's visits from Pennsylvania were frequent, and by the year 1810 the initial step looking to the more permanent organization of the Virginia congregations, was made in the installing of Henry Shank as bishop.

David Heatwole who came to Virginia from Lancaster county, Pa., in 1794, is regarded as the first deacon to serve in Virginia. Two other deacons—Samuel Rhodes and Samuel Shank appear to have lived closely contemporaneous with him.

On Good Friday April 1st, 1825, a dissension broke out in the Virginia brotherhood which in time effected the entire church and divided the ministry into about two equal factions. As it appeared impossible to adjust the matter of difference each body claimed allegiance to the Pennsylvania brotherhood and yet both insisted that the other had withdrawn itself from that body. Two ministers by the name of \_\_\_\_\_ Smith and \_\_\_\_\_ Sherrick reached Virginia with authority from the mother church to use what means they could to bring about a reconciliation. But it is said that they returned home without accomplishing the errand for which they came.

During the entire period of disunion which covered at least five years, the contest narrowed to the point as to which side could establish fellowship and allegiance with the Pennsylvania brotherhood.

When the second committee came, which was composed of Bishop Peter Eby and three other ministers, it sat in regular session at Weavers church, where both sides were given a hearing. The findings of the committee brought out the fact that one side, by its attitude had virtually withdrawn not only from the Virginia brotherhood, but also that in Pennsylvania. With this announcement the seceding ones were urged to admit their error and be reconciled to the church. They were slow to accept this proposition and some time was spent in waiting; when at last one of their leading ministers arose as spokesman for the rest, and said:—"Shunst den ist es uns schicklich zu beider Gemeinde stehn."

Bishop Eby quickly responded with: "Now sel is an schoner Foos."

The reconciliation so long labored and sought for, was from that moment accomplished with little difficulty.

That Bishop Eby's visit to Virginia at this time had a most conciliatory and lasting effect upon the Virginia brotherhood may be better understood when reading the following extract taken from page 176 of "**Mennonite Church History**," by Hartzler and Kauffman.

"Peter Eby, son of Christian Eby, and the first bishop of the Strasburg District, was one of the most conspicuous characters of the church in his day. He was born October 14, 1765, ordained to the ministry in 1800 and advanced to the bishop's office not long afterward. He died April 6th, 1843. He was one of the most eloquent ministers ordained in the Mennonite church, and held his congregations spell-bound and profoundly impressed all who heard him preach. He was an able writer, sound in doctrine, firm in discipline and earnest in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints."

With the church in Virginia once more on terms of peace and union, there followed that stability of doctrine and unifying of forces in the ministry that called for a conference. This important phase of church work was finally realized when on April 10th, 1835 the first conference convened at Weavers church with the following members present:

Peter Burkholder	Daniel Good
Abraham Niswander	Martin Kindig
Frederick Rhodes	Benjamin Wenger
David Heatwole—Deacon	

Absent:

Henry Shank, Bishop	David Burkholder
Michael Stauffer	John Fauber
Daniel Showalter	John Baer
Samuel Shank and Anthony Rhodes—Deacons	

With the death of Henry Shank in 1836 followed in time the ordination of Peter Burkholder to the office of Bishop. In succeeding years the exacting duties developing upon the bishop in all the congregations in Virginia and which extended over such a wide scope, at once suggested subdivision of the work that it might be shared by one or two others. To bring this about required the establishing of boundary lines that would divide the territory embraced by the conference into three bishoprics. By this arrangement which was made in about 1840, North Rockingham was called Lower District, South Rockingham, Middle District and the entire county of Augusta, Upper District.

Through the action of the conference and the church, Daniel Good was ordained bishop for Lower District. Peter Burkholder, who about three years before had been ordained bishop for the whole conference district, by virtue of his residence, was placed in charge of Middle District. The line between Rockingham and Augusta counties was made the southern boundary of his district and the Hopkins' Mill Road extending westward from Harrisonburg formed the boundary between Middle and Lower Districts. These boundaries have remained unchanged till the present day, (1910).

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1835

Conference met at Weaver's Church, on the 10th of April, 1835.

**Ministers Present:**—Abraham Niswander, Peter Burkholder, Daniel Good, Frederick Rhodes, Benjamin Wenger, Martin Kindig.

**Deacons Present:**—David Heatwole, of Augusta county, (those of Rockingham county not named).

The aged brethren, Henry Shank, Michael Stauffer, and John Fauber could not be present on account of bodily infirmity due to old age. Several others absent from other causes.

**General Welfare of the Church.**—This was a subject considered from various standpoints. It was thought best to adhere, as closely as practicable to the old order of things, and, if possible, bring it into more practical use.

**Provision for the Poor.**—It is thought proper to receive annual contributions from the members for the support of the poor and needy members, etc., and it is hereby agreed that the time of the Annual Conference be the time for this contribution. And it is thought consistent for each member to give a mite cheerfully. These collections shall be placed in the hands of a deacon, minister or a brother for the common use of the church and to be paid out only by the sanction of the church. Christ said, "Ye have the poor with you always and whenever ye will, ye may do them good." "Then the disciples every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwell in Judea which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." In 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, we have the following by Paul. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

Also according to the 12th chapter of Mark we see that the gift of two mites by the poor is more acceptable in the sight of God than the gifts by the rich of their abundance, if given willingly and from the right motive. "God loveth a cheerful giver." Paul says, "whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that from the Lord we receive the reward."

## THE RECORD-LESS GAP FROM 1835 TO 1860

Referring to the Mennonite conferences that were held in Virginia from year 1835 to 1860, no records regarding them can be found, and it is highly probable that none were ever kept.

It is related by the oldest members of the church who are now living that bishops, ministers and deacons came together in conference at least once a year if not oftener, for mutual consultation and as plans and measures were adopted that effected the welfare and stability of the church; they were at those times, perhaps more earnest and prayerful than at any other time in their lives.

That important measures vitally affecting the well-being of the church were put in force during this period is apparent in a number of instances; the first

in connection with the German language, which had previously been used exclusively in time of worship. In the face of strenuous opposition on the part of many well-meaning brethren and sisters, conference authorized the publication of an English edition of "The Mennonite Confession of Faith;" an English Hymn Book, as well as the translation into English of some church literature of which Peter Burkholder was the author.

The "Burkholder" Confession of Faith and his "Nine Reflections" were translated by Joseph Funk, and combined with "An introduction" by himself, into one book which was printed at Winchester, Virginia by Robinson & Hollis, in the year 1837.

In the meantime, Joseph Funk, Joseph Wenger and David Hartman were appointed as a committee to arrange and compile a selection of hymns suitable to the various occasions of religious worship among our people. This committee made choice of about 400 hymns that were classified under as many as 32 different heads, with the general title of "Psalms and Hymns and Spiritual Songs." This work, which also contained an appendix of about 40 German hymns, was printed at Harrisonburg, Va., by J. H. Wartman & Bro., in the year 1847. This work turns out to be the first English hymn book published by Mennonites in America. It continued in regular use in Virginia congregations for 50 years, and with its publication in 1870 at Elkhart, Ind. has been used extensively by congregations of our people in other states and in Canada.

Another instance is the encouragement and support given by the church and conference of this period to the printing plant established at Singers Glen by Joseph Funk. He being a great lover of devotional singing, his song book, "The Harmonia Sacra," which from the year 1835 to 1847 bore the very appropriate title of "Genuine Church Music;" in time reached almost every Mennonite fireside in Virginia. With a work like this introduced to the home and the singing class, there naturally came, long before the days of Sunday Schools and Bible meetings, to the Virginia Mennonites, a universal love for sacred song that became proverbial not only with the generation then living, but served to transmit it to succeeding generations of their offspring here and in other states and has given life and spiritual animation to the singing in all their congregations.

It is also observed that during this period conference took a firm stand against the introduction of slavery in any form on the part of members of the church—and the proposition advocated for several years by several prominent members of the conference for establishing a General Conference for the Mennonites in Pennsylvania, Canada, Ohio and Virginia would indicate that the Virginia conference in those early days was maintaining a vigorous stand against the evils of the time and also entertained and put into action some of the most advanced views that it, as an ecclesiastical body, ever before or since had under consideration.

Traditional accounts are given of how each minister and deacon, when the time for conference arrived, started from home on horseback with a pair of saddle-bags across his horse—the one side containing lunch for himself, and the other oats or corn for the horse. It is said also that at dinner time each one fed his horse and then sat down at some convenient spot and ate his lunch to himself.

— The conference sessions appear to have been held privately with only bishops, ministers and deacons present, and in all cases where important action was taken the same was later reported to the church.

With the progressive spirit that appears to have been manifest and the very important action that was taken in some of these conferences it is to be greatly

regretted today that they were not made a matter of record to be preserved for use in future generations of the church. This long gap in the records can be bridged over only in part, by noting the rather numerous instances of the ordination of ministers and deacons. Referring to the Registry of ministers and deacons, and by following the dates of their ordination, it is seen that the average from 1835 to 1860 is about one for each year.

### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1860

Conference met at Weavers Church (Central District), April 28th and 29th, 1860.—The following members of Conference were present:

**Bishops:**—Martin Burkholder, John Geil, Jacob Hildebrand.—3.

**Ministers:**—Samuel Coffman, Daniel Showalter, Daniel S. Heatwole, John Weaver, David H. Landes, Jacob Driver, Benjamin Wenger, Peter Shoemaker, Isaac Grove, Christian Brunk, John Evers.—11.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, Anthony Rhoads, Jacob Good.—4. ger, Jacob Good.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 19.

Conference opened by singing, reading and prayer; after which the bishops delivered their accustomed addresses upon the duties devolving upon them as officers of the church. These were followed by remarks from other members of Conference, ministers and deacons.

**\*Time for holding Conference.**—Decided that the time for holding Conferences be as follows: The first Friday and Saturday of April, and the first Friday and Saturday in September of each year; and that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be administered on the following Sabbath at the same place. That the Conferences be held in the three Districts alternately.

### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1860

Conference met at Trissel's Church (Lower District), September 28th and 29th, 1860, with the following members present:

**Bishops:**—Martin Burkholder, John Geil, Jacob Hildebrand.—3.

**Ministers:**—Samuel Coffman, Daniel S. Heatwole, Jacob Driver, John Evers, Isaac Grove, Peter Shoemaker, Daniel Showalter, Christian Brunk.—8.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, Anthony Rhodes, Jacob Good.—4.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 15.

Conference opened in the usual way, singing, prayer, etc.

The following subjects were considered:

**Law Suits.**—Decided that it is inconsistent with the word of God for a brother to engage in a lawsuit, hence any brother thus engaged thereby severs himself from the privileges of the communion.

\*This is the earliest record we have referring to the conference as holding its sessions semi-annually. It is not known whether in time previous to this if its sessions were held more than once a year or not.

This conference also makes mention of the arrangements that were made for holding communion in connection with the conference, and that its sessions should be held in each of the three districts in the regular order of: 1st, Upper district; 2nd, Middle district and 3rd, Lower district. This order has been continued up until the present year, (1910); except in May of this year when the conference met in the Warwick River district, and for the first time in all its history, that a session was held outside the Shenandoah Valley. There are the instance of two conferences, that of October 1884, being held at the Kernstown church in the Winchester district, and another in October 1890.

\***Singing in Church.**—Will it be allowed to hold singing schools in our churches? Passed that each district decide as may seem best to them.

Conference closed by singing and prayer.

### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1861

Conference at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), April 27th and 28th, 1861. Brethren present:

**Bishop:**—John Geil, Jacob Hildebrand.—2.

**Ministers.**—Isaac Grove, Peter Shoemaker, Samuel Coffman, Daniel S. Heatwole, Christian Brunk, David H. Landes, John Evers.—7.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, John Grove.—3.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 12.

Conference opened in the usual way with singing and prayer.

†**Call for Bishop.**—Decided that a bishop be ordained in Central district to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of our lamented Bishop Martin Burkholder.

**Call for Minister and Deacon.**—Bishop John Geil, asked permission to ordain a minister and deacon in his (Lower) district. Granted.

\*\***The War.**—It will be noticed that this was just about the time that the political world was very much disturbed, hence, we find no record of any other conference being held until April, 1863.

### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1863

Conference met at Bank Church (Central District), April 25th and 26th, 1863. Members present:

**Bishops:**—John Geil, Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—Benjamin Wenger, Daniel Showalter, Isaac Grove, Daniel S. Heatwole, David H. Landes, Jacob Driver, John Weaver, Christian Brunk, A. Shank, John Evers.—10.

\*These singing schools were made up at first principally by children and young people, but in time the love of sacred song became so general that parents and older people joined with the young in these meetings which were conducted by some one familiar with the rudiments of music. The meetings being usually opened and closed with prayer added much to giving all due religious sanctity to the exercises.

It appears that much of the congregational singing previous to this consisted only in the use of the melody. It was not until the introduction of the singing schools that the harmony of parts—such as bass and tenor—came into general use with the melody or leading part.

†In the death of Bishop Martin Burkholder the church in Virginia lost a strong pillar. He died at the age of 43 years, 10 months and 11 days, in the midst of a life of great usefulness to the church, though having been bishop of Middle district for the comparatively short period of about nine years.

\*\*That no conference were held for some years after April 1861 is in great part accounted for because of the Shenandoah Valley being very much overrun by contending armies. Whole battalions of soldiers were quartered for indefinite periods upon grounds at or near the places of worship used by our people and in some instances the church building itself was used as a commissary store by the troops.

In other instances public worship was disturbed or broken up by reason of the real or imaginary approach of soldiers.

Fathers and sons were much away from home, either refugeeing in northern and western states, or, in looking after their stock, which was frequently removed to the mountains or wooded sections of the country, for greater safety.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, Benjamin Wenger, Jacob Geil.—

4. Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 17.

Conference opened with singing, reading, and prayer; followed by addresses from the bishops, ministers and deacons.

The following subjects were now introduced:

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop Geil asked permission to ordain a minister in the Lower district. Unanimously consented.

**Family Worship** was spoken of, and was thought proper to urge the brethren to observe it, especially the ministers and deacons.

**\*Applicants.**—Persons applying to our Church for membership, who are at the same time members of some other church, shall be required to bring certificate of standing in such church, and if any of our members, desiring to unite with some other church, should apply to our bishop for certificate of standing in the Church, it shall be the duty of the bishop to give such certificate.

**Record of Members.**—Decided that it be the duty of bishops to keep records of members of their respective districts.

**Members not at Counsel Meeting.**—Decided that it be the duty of the deacons to visit all members who do not attend the Counsel meetings, hence, Counsel meetings shall be held in time so that the deacons may make such visits before Conference.

**Certificates from Strange Members.**—Decided that we require certificate of good standing, before receiving to our Communion strange members from other districts.

**Members moving to other Districts.**—Decided that a member moving from one district to another be required to bring a certificate of standing from his former bishop or minister.

**Complaints at Counsel Meeting.**—Decided that no complaints be received at Counsel meeting unless the member bringing complaint has complied with Matt. 18:15, 16.

### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1863

Conference met at Trissels Church (Lower District), September 25th and 26th, 1863. The following members were present:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, John Geil.—3.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Showalter, Daniel S. Heatwole, Christian Brunk, John Evers, Isaac Grove, Abraham Shank, David H. Landes.—7.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, Benjamin Wenger, Jacob Geil, Anthony Roads, Jacob Good, Peter Blosser.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 16.

Conference opened as usual, by reading, singing and prayer.

**Call for Ministers and Deacons.**—Bishop Hildebrand asked permission to ordain two ministers and two deacons in the Upper district. Granted.

**Single Brother for Minister.**—May a single brother be taken into the lot for minister? Answered. He may if the congregation be satisfied with the brother.

Conference closed with prayer and singing.

\*Exceptions to this regulation taken later in cases where denominations refuse the granting of certificates to such of their members who desire to unite with the Mennonite Church.

## CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1864

Conference met at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), April 28th and 29th, 1864. Members present:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, John Geil, Samuel Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—Jacob Driver, Peter Shoemaker, Christian Brunk, David H. Landes, John Evers, Isaac Grove, D. S. Heatwole, Abraham Shank.—8.

**Deacons:**—Peter Blosser, Jacob Geil, Jacob Landes, Jacob R. Hildebrand, F. A. Rhodes.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 16.

Conference opened as usual.

**Secretary.**—On motion Jacob R. Hildebrand was appointed Secretary.

Suggested by Bishop J. Hildebrand that all the ministers and deacons give words of admonition, and that F. A. Rhodes designate the order in which they are to speak.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop John Geil asked permission to ordain a minister in the Lower District. Granted.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop Hildebrand asked permission to ordain a minister in the Upper District. Granted.

**Call for Deacon.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission to ordain a deacon in the Central District. Granted.

**\*Hiring Slaves.**—The subject of hiring slaves was introduced by Bishop Geil. Decided that inasmuch as it is against our creed and discipline to own or traffic in slaves; so it is also forbidden for a brother to hire a slave unless such slave be entitled to receive the pay for such labor by the consent of his owner. But where neighbors exchange labor, the labor of slaves may be received.

**Time of Conference changed.**—On motion of Jacob Driver it was agreed to change the time for meeting of conference from the present to the last Friday in March, and in August.

Conference closed.

## CONFERENCE, AUGUST, 1864

Conference met at Weavers Church, August 26th and 27th, 1864. Members present:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, John Geil, Samuel Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Showalter, Isaac Grove, Peter Shoemaker, Christian Brunk, Abraham Shank, Daniel S. Heatwole, Samuel Shank, Jacob Driver, David H. Landes, John Evers, John Weaver.—11.

**Deacons:**—Benjamin Wenger, F. A. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, Jacob Geil, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Simeon Heatwole.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 20.

**Pride.**—After the usual prelimaries, the subject of pride was spoken upon to a considerable extent. Decided that inasmuch as pride has become to be such a formidable evil, and is manifesting itself in so many ways it is important that members guard against it as much as possible.

**Amusements.**—This conference being aware that the so-called, innocent amusements indulged in by the young at apple-cuttings and butter-boilings, are

\*Some individual cases point to the fact that long before this, decided action had already been taken on the question of slavery by the Virginia conference.

indulged in to excess. Hence we do earnestly recommend that parents suppress these things as much as possible.

Conference closed.

### CONFERENCE, MARCH, 1865

Conference in session at Brannemans Church, March 31st and April 1st, 1865. Members present:

**Bishops:**—John Geil, Samuel Coffman.—2.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Showalter, Isaac Grove, Peter Shoemaker, Daniel S. Heatwole, John Evers, Abraham Shank, Jacob Driver, Samuel Shank.—8.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, Jacob Geil, Anthony Roads, Simeon Heatwole.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 15.

**Call for Bishop.**—The only matter upon record, considered at this conference was that Bishop Geil feeling his inability through age and feebleness, desired a bishop to be ordained in his (Lower) District. Not granted.

### CONFERENCE, AUGUST, 1865

Conference convened at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), August 26th and 27th, 1865. Members present:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, John Geil, Samuel Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—Jacob Driver, John Weaver, Christian Brunk, Abraham Shank, John Evers, Isaac Grove, Peter Shoemaker.—7.

**Deacons:**—Jacob R. Hildebrand, F. A. Rhodes, Benjamin Wenger, Jacob Geil, Jacob Landes.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 15.

Preliminaries as usual.

**Pride.**—The subject pride was commented upon at length and Conference unanimously resolved to guard against pride, and the fashions in their various forms and keep them out of the Church as much as possible. They are certainly a great evil, and should not be tolerated.

**Query.**—Will our Church receive to its membership, without re-baptizing, a person who was baptized in an adult state by a minister who was himself baptized in infancy only? Considered and deferred for consideration in a future Conference.

Nothing further on record.

### CONFERENCE, MARCH, 1866

Conference convened at the Bank Church (Central District), March 30th and 31st, 1866. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, John Geil.—3.

**Ministers:**—Christian Brunk, A. Shank, S. Shank, J. Driver, D. S. Heatwole, D. H. Landes, J. Evers, J. Weaver, I. Grove, P. Shoemaker.—10.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Geil, B. Wenger, S. Heatwole, J. Landes, J. Good.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 19.

**Exhortations, Etc.**—Aside of the usual introductory service the following is about the substance of what is recorded of the proceedings of this Conference.

**Personal Difficulties.**—The subject of personal difficulties was discussed.

**Family Worship.**—The subject of family worship was seriously considered, and feelingly recommended as a duty developing upon the heads of all families, and also strenuously to guard against the sin of pride. Conference adjourned.

### CONFERENCE, AUGUST, 1866

Conference convened at Trissels Church (Lower District), August 31st and September 1st, 1866. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, John Geil.—3.

**Ministers:**—C. Brunk, A. Shank, S. Shank, J. Driver, D. S. Heatwole, D. H. Landes, J. Evers, J. Weaver, I. Grove, P. Shoemaker.—10.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Geil, B. Wenger, S. Heatwole, J. Good, P. Blosser, A. Roads.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 20.

The following subjects are recorded as considered by this conference.

**Suing at Law.**—It is hereby decided that suing at law is contrary to the Word of God under all circumstances. Hence, members having financial difficulties shall have them adjusted by arbitrators.

**Voting.**—Agreed that we recommend to our brethren to take no part in politics, but if brethren desire to vote let them do so peaceably and quietly.

Conference adjourned.

### CONFERENCE, MARCH, 1867

Conference convened at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), March 28th and 29th, 1867. Brethren present:

**Bishops:**—Samuel Coffman, J. Geil, J. Hildebrand.—3.

**Ministers:**—I. Grove, P. Shoemaker, D. S. Heatwole, J. Weaver, D. H. Landes, J. Evers, J. Driver, A. Shank, S. Shank.—9.

**Deacons:**—P. Blosser, F. A. Rhodes, J. R. Hildebrand, J. Landes.—4.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 16.

**\*First Work of Conference.**—The first work of all our Conferences is for the brethren to bring sort of report of their past labors and experiences, acknowledging their short comings and imperfections, and forming new resolutions to be more faithful in keeping house according to the pattern laid down by Christ and his apostles. And as there was no business of special importance before this Conference, the time was occupied, chiefly, by the bishops, who delivered rich admonitions touching the duties of those who profess to be the followers of Christ.

**Time of Holding Conference Changed.**—The time of holding Conference was again changed to meet on last Friday in April, and in September of each year.

Conference closed.

### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1867

Conference convened at Weavers Church (Central District), September 27th and 28th, 1867. Members present:

\*With this conference we have the earliest account of all members of the body taking part in what has ever since been known as the "opening part" of conference. Previous to this it appears that the bishops occupied all this time.

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, J. Geil, S. Coffman and J. M. Brenneman, of Allen County, Ohio.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, C. Brunk, S. Shank, A. Shank, D. S. Heatwole, J. Driver, D. H. Landes, J. Evers, J. Weaver, P. Shoemaker, I. Grove, Jacob Andrews, of Lancaster, Pa., Michael Horst, of Md., and Peter Basinger, of Mahoning county, Ohio.—14.

**Deacons:**—B. Wenger, J. Good, S. Heatwole, P. Blosser, J. R. Hildebrand, J. Geil, F. A. Rhodes, J. Landes.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

Conference opened as usual. Subjects considered.

**Suspending a Member.**—Can a member be suspended from the church unless it be for a gross sin, or a sin unto death, without being first visited, or getting consent of the church? Decided that he cannot.

**Official Notice of Suspension.**—When a member is suspended or excommunicated, should he be officially notified of the action of the church? Decided that he should.

**Visiting Weak Churches.**—The subject of visiting weak churches was considered. Decided that it be the duty of the ministering brethren to visit the weak churches more frequently. \* \* \* Conference closed.

#### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1868

Conference met at Brannemans Church (Lower District), April 25th, 1868. Members present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—D. S. Heatwole, J. Driver, C. Brunk, S. Shank, A. Shank, D. H. Landes, J. Evers.—7.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Geil.—2.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 12.

**\*This Conference.**—The attendance at this conference for some cause, not stated, was small. Records show that many things were considered but no definite action taken upon any.

#### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1868

Conference met at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), September 25th and 26th, 1868. Members present:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman.—2.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, C. Brunk, J. Evers, D. S. Heatwole, J. Driver, J. Weaver, D. H. Landes, I. Grove, P. Shoemaker.—9.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, S. Heatwole, J. R. Hildebrand, J. Landes.—4.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 15.

**Suing at Law.**—This conference decided that members suing at law do thereby excommunicate themselves from the communion.

**Vanities Disapproved.**—This conference expressed its emphatic disapproval of the various vanities indulged in at this age, such as shows, picnics, etc.

Conference closed.

\*This unusual absence of members of conference is accounted for because of sickness and death in several families at that time in both Middle and Lower districts.

## CONFERENCE, APRIL, MAY, 1869

Conference convened at the Bank Church, (Central District), April 30th and May 1st, 1869. Members present:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, J. Geil, S. Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, J. Weaver, D. S. Heatwole, P. Shoemaker, J. Driver, C. Brunk, S. Shank, J. Evers, D. H. Landes, A. Shank.—10.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Geil, P. Blosser, S. Heatwole, B. Wenger.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 18.

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission to ordain a minister in Central District. It was granted.

**\*Our Ministers, whom to unite in Matrimony.**—The rules of our church have always been that our ministers were not allowed to celebrate the rite of matrimony between parties not members of our church. Application was made to conference to have that rule changed. It was considered and dismissed.

**Life Insurance.**—Life insurance was considered and decided that no member be allowed to take a life insurance policy.

Conference closed as usual with singing and prayer.

## CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1869

Conference at Trissels Church (Lower District), September 24th and 25th, 1869. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—S. Coffman, J. Hildebrand, J. Geil.—3.

**Ministers.**—D. Showalter, J. Weaver, D. S. Heatwole, J. Driver, J. Evers, D. H. Landes, C. Brunk, S. Shank, A. Shank, J. M. Holdeman, of Bucks county, Pa., Abel Horning, of Pennsylvania.—11.

**Deacons:**—J. Good, J. Geil, F. A. Rhodes.—3.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 17.

Conference opened with singing and prayer.

**Calls for Minister.**—Bishops Coffman and Geil each asked permission to ordain a minister in his district. Granted.

**Call for Minister and Deacon.**—Bishop Hildebrand then asked permission to ordain a minister and deacon in his district. Granted.

**Sunday Schools.**—The subject of holding Sunday Schools was considered and passed. Subject, however, to the decision of the Church.†

**Reporting a Thief.**—Is it right to report a thief to the civil authorities?\*\* Decided it is not. (error)—See foot note and conference of May 8, 1885.

**Stay Law.**—Is it right for a brother to use the Stay law.†† Decided it is not.

Conference adjourned.

\*Reference is here made to a regulation that forbids ministers from performing a marriage ceremony for parties who were not members of the church. It may be possible that the word bishops is here meant, as it had always been the rule that none other than a bishop performed marriage ceremonies, and that only for members of the church.

†Sunday Schools subsequently ratified by the Church.

\*\*"Is it right for a member of Christ's Church to volunteer as a police officer to arrest a thief."

††A law to hold off or prevent the prompt collection of debts.

## CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1870

Conference convened at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), April 29th and 30th, 1870. Members present:

**Bishops:**—S. Coffman, J. Hildebrand, J. Geil.—3.

**Minister:**—D. S. Heatwole, J. Driver, J. N. Driver, Gabriel D. Heatwole, D. H. Landes, P. Shoemaker, D. Showalter, C. Brunk, A. Shank, S. Shank, I. Grove, J. Weaver, J. R. Hildebrand.—13.

**Deacons:**—S. Heatwole, F. A. Rhodes, J. Landes.—3.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 19.

Proceedings.

**Call for Deacon.**—F. A. Rhodes requested this Conference to allow a deacon to be ordained in Central District. Granted.

**\*A Duty of Deacons.**—On motion of Bishop Coffman it was decided that when difficulties arise among members that must be taken to the Church for adjustment, it shall be the duty of the deacons to get the evidence in the case and report the same to the Church, and take the counsel upon it.

## CONFERENCE, 1870

Conference in the fall of 1870 was to meet at the Bank Church (Central District) but was prevented by a freshet at the time.†

## CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1871

Conference met at Brennemans Church (Lower District), April 28th and 29th, 1871. Members enrolled as follows:

**Bishops:**—S. Coffman, J. Hildebrand, J. Geil, George Brenneman, of Ohio.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, A. Shank, S. Shank, C. Brunk, J. Driver, Joseph N. Driver, G. D. Heatwole, J. Weaver, D. H. Landes, J. Evers, P. Shoemaker, I. Grove, J. R. Hildebrand.—13.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, P. Blosser, Michael Shank, S. Heatwole, Daniel H. Good, J. Geil, Abraham Good, of Ohio.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

Conference opened with the usual devotional exercises followed by addresses from the bishops and others.

**\*\*Meetings after Conference.**—The propriety of holding meetings after Conference was considered and decided that each bishop of this Conference

\*It was subsequently enacted that such statements to the Church should be made in writing.

†This was one of the greatest freshets ever known to have visited this section of country. It is recorded that 22 inches of rain fell within the space of six days. This caused a daily rise of water in all streams in the vicinity of the Church and there being no bridges for crossing, the members of conference were prevented from assembling at the place appointed.

A number of ministers and deacons met at the home of Deacon Fred A. Rhodes, but no record of the business, if any, that may have been transacted, is available.

\*\*Of course it is known that previous to this date and for a long period afterward the sessions of the Virginia conference were held privately and apart from the body of the Church. Hence the necessity naturally came for calling a meeting of members in each of the several districts for laying all action of conference before the Church for final adoption. In recognizing the government of the Church as congregational, no measure adopted by conference could be generally enforced until ratified by the Church.

shall hold a meeting after each conference for the purpose of making known to the Church the proceedings of Conference.

**Homestead Law.**—The Homestead Law was again considered and was unanimously decided that to use it is wrong.\*

**Civil Offices.**—The subject of brethren holding civil offices was considered and disapproved.

The records show no discrimination, perhaps with a view of further consideration in the future.

Conference closed with devotional exercises.

\*\*\*

No records are available for the conference of the fall of 1871, which according to the regular turn should have met at the Hildebrand church in Upper District September 29th and 30th.

From the intimation given regarding the hold-over question on "Civil Offices," for a future conference, and as this question did not come up till the following spring April 26th and 27th, at Weavers Church in Middle District, the probability would appear that the Hildebrand Conference, from some cause was omitted.

#### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1872

Conference met at Weavers Church (Central District), April 26th and 27th, 1872. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—John Geil, Samuel Coffman.—2.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, J. Weaver, I. Grove, P. Shoemaker, J. Driver, C. Brunk, A. Shank, D. S. Heatwole, S. Shank, J. Evers, G. D. Heatwole, J. N. Driver, D. H. Landes.—13.

**Deacons:**—B. Wenger, J. Good, F. A. Rhodes, M. Shank, J. Geil, D. H. Good, S. Heatwole, J. Landes.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

Conference opened as usual.

**Holding Civil offices.**—The subject of brethren holding civil offices was considered and decided that those who are now holding office be allowed to continue their term of office, but no one be allowed to seek or hold office after that.

Conference closed.

#### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1872

Conference met at Trissels Church (Lower District), September 27th and 28th, 1872. The following members were present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, S. Coffman, J. Hildebrand.—3.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, J. Weaver, C. Brunk, P. Shoemaker, I. Grove, J. Driver, S. Shank, D. H. Landes, J. N. Driver, A. Shank, D. S. Heatwole.—11.

**Deacons:**—J. Good, J. Geil, M. Shank, D. H. Good.—4.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 18.

Conference opened with devotional exercises.

\*The State Homestead Law would exempt a debtor from an execution made by a creditor, to realize from the sale of the house and home in which himself and family find shelter. The Virginia Conference has always taken the stand that members of the Mennonite Church should pay their just debts as far as possible, that it was wrong to take advantage of a law that would debar a creditor from making collection according to the ordinary process of law.

**This Conference.**—There being no business of special \*importance to be considered, conference closed after the usual addresses of the bishops upon the prosperity of the Church.

### CONFERENCE FOR 1873

No records found.

The regular turn for the next Conference was for the Hildebrand Church in the Upper District April 25th and 26th, 1873. It was a cold, snowy, stormy period, and if the Conference convened at all it must have been with a small attendance.

Indirect records show that the fall conference for 1873 was held at the Bank Church in Middle District September 26th and 27th, with a largely attended communion meeting on Sunday following. Preacher Philip H. Parret was a visiting minister to this conference from Pennsylvania.

### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1874

Conference met at Brennemans Church (Lower District), April 25th and 26th, 1874. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—J. Weaver, J. Driver, D. S. Heatwole, I. Grove, C. Brunk, D. H. Landes, P. Shoemaker, J. N. Driver, A. Shank, S. Shank, G. D. Heatwole, George Brunk.—12.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Good, J. Geil, P. Blosser, S. Heatwole, D. H. Good, M. Shank.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons, 22.

Conference opened as usual after which the following subjects were considered:

**Family Prayer.**—Much was said on the duty of family prayer.

**Secret Societies.**—It was considered and decided that members should not join secret organizations, as it is not in harmony with the Word of God.

**Erring Brethren.**—Discussed and decided that in cases when the church require acknowledgement of erring members, it shall be the duty of the deacons to specify a time in which such acknowledgments should be made.

**†Marrying out of Church.**—The subject of members marrying out of the church was considered. No change, however, was made from the former rule which is as follows: Members shall have the privilege of marrying persons not members of our church, provided such persons are in good standing in society, and possessed of a good moral character; but marrying members of the church is in all cases preferred. And we hereby urgently recommend to members the importance of being careful in choosing companions.

**Banning.**—This subject was discussed, but dismissed without action.

**\*\*Revival Meetings.**—The subject was discussed and disapproved, especially

\*This appears to have been a period of general good feeling though the conference is marked by more than the usual number of absentees.

<sup>†</sup>The rule with reference to members having privilege to marry persons not united with the Church dates back as far as the year 1845 to near the close of the bishopric of Peter Burkholder.

\*\*The revival meetings referred to were those held by neighboring denominations where unusually boisterous and shouting experiences were prevalent. The purpose of the conference was to discourage members or their children from any inclination to take part in or to be led away from the Church by such meetings.

in the way that they are often conducted. Therefore members are hereby advised not to take part in them, as it is not in harmony with the rules of the church, and the tendency is to disregard the advice of our Savior (Luke 14:27—32) which is to the effect that if we wish to be his disciples we must take up the cross and follow him, and those who contemplate a Christian life should first calmly and sincerely count the cost. And it is our duty earnestly to admonish our children and the young people generally to do so.

Conference closed.

#### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1874

Conference convened at Mount Pleasant Church (Upper District), September 25th and 26th, 1874. The following members were present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—J. Weaver, J. Driver, P. Shoemaker, S. Shank, C. Brunk, G. D. Heatwole, I. Grove, D. H. Landes, J. N. Driver, G. Brunk, Daniel Roth, of Maryland.—11.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, S. Heatwole, D. H. Good, P. Blosser, J. Landes, M. Shank.—6

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 20.

Conference opened by reading singing and prayer.

**Evils in the Church.**—The various evils that Church members are tempted to indulge in; such as circus shows, picnics, church fairs, etc., were again commented upon and emphatically disapproved. We hope our members will not go to these places.

**Close Communion.**—Our Church has always regarded it consistent with our profession to hold close communion, and it was again considered and decided to abide by the old rule.

**Ministers Voting at Church Counsel.**—As it has been a custom of the ministers not to vote at Church Counsel, we do hereby say that it is their privilege and duty to vote at such meetings.

**Ministers may Officiate.**—Ministers are hereby authorized to administer baptism and the Sacrament in cases of necessity in the absence of a bishop.

**Conferences Public or Private.**—It is hereby decided that the usual devotional exercises of our Conferences be conducted publicly and that members and their children are hereby especially invited to attend.

Conference closed.

#### CONFERENCE, APRIL, MAY, 1875

Conference at Weavers Church (Central District), April 30th and May 1st, 1875. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, J. Geil, S. Coffman.—3.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, A. Shank, J. Driver, D. S. Heatwole, D. H. Landes, Daniel Roth, C. Brunk, G. Brunk, J. N. Driver, G. D. Heatwole, P. Shoemaker, J. Weaver.—12.

**Deacons:**—J. Good, J. Geil, D. H. Good, F. A. Rhodes, Daniel Mellinger, B. Wenger, P. Blosser, M. Shank, S. Heatwole.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

Conference opened as usual after which the following was considered.

**Call for Ministers.**—Application was made for the ordination of three ministers, two in Central, and one in Lower District. Granted.

**Conference, Public or Private.**—We hereby give notice that we return to our former rule by holding the entire exercises of our Conferences private.

Conference closed after listening to many things which were in their nature admonitive and advisory.

### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1875

Conference at Trissels Church (Lower District), September 24th and 25th, 1875 The following members reported present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, Abraham Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, J. Weaver, J. Driver, D. H. Landes, I. Grove, C. Brunk, D. S. Heatwole, J. N. Driver, S. Shank, G. Brunk, Solomon Beery, J. S. Coffman, John Geil, Jr.—13.

**Deacons:**—M. Shank, J. Geil, D. Mellinger, D. H. Good, J. Good, George Funk, of Indiana.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

Conference opened as usual after which the following was considered:

**Members Voted for Minister or Deacon.**—Decided that the rule be as formerly, that if a brother refuse to go into the lot he does it upon his own responsibility.

**Request to Ordain a Minister.**—Application was made to have a minister ordained in Frederick county, Va. Granted.

Conference adjourned after the usual exercises.

### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1876

Conference convened at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), April 28th and 29th, 1876. Members present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—I. Grove, D. S. Heatwole, J. R. Hildebrand, J. N. Driver, G. Brunk, J. Geil Jr., J. S. Coffman, J. Driver, D. H. Landes, D. Roth, S. Shank, G. D. Heatwole, S. Beery, D. Mellinger, C. Brunk.—15.

**Deacons:**—J. Geil, M. Shank, F. A. Rhodes, D. H. Good, J. Landes.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

**Application for Deacon.**—C. Brunk made application to have a deacon ordained in Frederick county, Va. It was granted.

**Warnings.**—Secret organizations of different orders were again spoken against by the bishops, and abundantly testified to by the brethren.

Conference adjourned.

### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1876

Conference at the Bank Church (Central District), September 29th and 30th, 1876. The following members are reported present:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, J. Geil, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—J. Weaver, J. Driver, D. S. Heatwole, D. Showalter, D. H.

Landes, I. Grove, C. Brunk, S. Roth, J. N. Driver, G. D. Heatwole, Samuel Roads, of Pennsylvania, G. Brunk, J. S. Coffman, S. Beery, D. Mellinger, J. Geil, Jr.—16.

**Deacons:**—B. Wenger, J. Good, F. A. Rhodes, J. Geil, D. H. Good, M. Shank.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

Conference opened the usual way by singing and prayer.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop Geil made application to have a minister ordained in Hardy county, W. Va.

**Swearing of Oaths.**—This subject was discussed at length, and the Confession of Faith referred to.

Nothing further upon record. Conference adjourned.

### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1877

Conference met at Brennemans Church (Lower District), April 27th and 28th, 1877. The following names reported present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, J. Driver, C. Brunk, D. Roth, S. Shank, G. D. Heatwole, G. Brunk, D. S. Heatwole, D. H. Landes, D. Mellinger, Benjamin Lesher, of Pennsylvania, J. Geil, S. Beery.—13.

**Deacons:**—J. Geil, J. Good, D. H. Good, F. A. Rhodes, P. Blosser, M. Shank.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

Conference as usual.

**Fire Insurance.**—The subject of fire insurance was discussed and decided that it should not be encouraged.

**Application for Minister.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission to ordain a minister in Central District. Granted.

**Offenders.**—Decided that all offenders be visited and treated alike, without respect of persons.

Conference closed as usual.

### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1877

Conference at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), September 28th and and 29th, 1877. The following members were present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, S. Coffman, J. Hildebrand, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—I. Grove, J. R. Hildebrand, J. Driver, S. Shank, J. N. Driver, D. H. Landes, D. S. Heatwole, J. S. Coffman, G. D. Heatwole, J. Geil, Abraham Burkholder.—11.

**Deacons:**—J. Geil, J. Landes, D. H. Good, F. A. Rhodes, M. Shank.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 20.

Conference opened, followed by addresses.

**Pride.**—The subject of pride was again discussed, and the following resolutions adopted:

*Resolved* 1. That the wearing of finger-rings, breast-pins, ornamental shirt fronts, cuffs, fashionable collars, ruffles, roached or otherwise fashionable

hair, is inconsistent with the word of God.

*Resolved 2.* That the brethren and sisters be required to be faithful to their promise in conforming to the rules of the Church in regard to dress.

*Resolved 3.* That the superfluous ornamenting of houses or other buildings, either in the manner of building or in decorating the walls and tables with pictures, etc., is inconsistent and contrary to the word of God.

*Resolved 4.* That every brother or sister neglecting to comply with these promises, with regard to conformity to the rules of the Church, shall be visited and reasoned with.

*Resolved 5.* That the actions of this Conference be presented to the Churches in the several districts at meetings appointed for that special purpose.

**Staying from Counsel Meetings.**—It was decided that members who stay away from counsel meeting only because they are offended, shall be considered offenders themselves, and shall be dealt with accordingly.

Conference closed as usual.

#### CONFERENCE, APRIL, 1878

Conference at Weavers Church (Central District) April 26th and 27th, 1878. The following members were present:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Showalter, D. Roth, D. Mellinger, J. S. Coffman, I. Grove, D. S. Heatwole, S. Beery, S. Shank, C. Brunk, J. N. Driver, D. H. Landes, G. D. Heatwole, J. Geil, Jr., G. Brunk.—14.

**Deacons:**—M. Shank, P. Blosser, J. Landes, J. Good, J. Geil, D. H. Good.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

Conference opened by singing, reading and prayer.

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission to ordain two ministers in his district. Granted.

**\*School Exhibitions.**—This subject was discussed, and it was decided that members should take no part in them.

**Former Resolutions.**—Resolutions were adopted at our last Conference, taking a very prominent stand against the wearing of finger-rings, breast-pins, etc., and we think to those things enumerated in the first resolution referred to, should be added the wearing of ear rings, and watch chains conspicuously.

Conference adjourned.

(No records for conferences from September, 1878 to September, 1879.)

#### CONFERENCE, APRIL, MAY, 1880

Conference at Brennemans Church (Lower District), April 30th and May 1st, 1880. The following members reported present:

\*The feature of School Exhibitions more particularly referred to here was the craze then so prevalent for foolish and clownish dialogues representing the lower order of civilized characters. Other features came up in the form of theatrical plays where knives and pistols figured in the performance, and those who "took part" being required to dress and paint their faces after the manner of the characters represented. In the light of God's word, the conference could not do otherwise than to openly testify against them and to forbid members to take part in them.

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, J. Geil, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, D. H. Landes, J. N. Driver, D. Roth, A. Burkholder, Peter S. Heatwole, G. D. Heatwole, I. Grove, C. Brunk, S. Shank, J. Geil, D. Mellinger, Samuel S. Weaver.—13.

**Deacons:**—J. Good, J. Geil, Jacob Showalter, J. Landes, F. A. Rhodes, Samuel H. Weaver, M. Shank.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

Conference opened as usual.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission to ordain two ministers in his district.

**Open Communion.**—This question was again discussed, but no action taken.

**Customs at Funerals.**—The custom of mourners at funeral services, such as brethren wearing their hats, failing to kneel in prayer, and the wearing of crape, was spoken of and completely disapproved. We hereby caution our members against anything inconsistent simply because it is custom.

**Meeting after Conference.**—The propriety of holding meetings in the several districts after each Conference, for the purpose of bringing before the Church the proceedings of Conference, was considered and was decided that it be left discretionary with each district.

**Insurance.**—The propriety of members taking a policy in an incorporated insurance company where an annuity is paid, was considered, and it was decided that it will not be allowed.

Conference closed with the usual exercises.

#### CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER, 1880

Conference at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), September 24th and 25th, 1880. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, A. Shank.—2.

**Ministers:**—D. H. Landes, J. N. Driver, J. R. Hildebrand, I. Grove, D. Roth, John Burkholder, of Ohio, Peter S. Heatwole, S. Shank, J. Geil, M. Rohrer, of Ohio, D. S. Heatwole, S. Beery, Joseph F. Heatwole, Abraham Wenger.—14.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Landes, S. H. Weaver, M. Shank.—4.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 20.

Conference opened with the usual devotional exercises.

**Former Actions Re-considered.**—In the first place, much was said in confirmation of the proceedings of former Conferences, but no changes made in anything.

**Musical Instruments.**—The subject of members using musical instruments was spoken of and warmly protested against, but finally laid over for further consideration.

**Query.**—A brother having been formally ordained to the ministry, who after due effort to preach, fails to succeed, and finally abandons further effort, shall he be required to take his seat in church with the ministers or with the congregation? Decided with the congregation.

**Mustaches.**—As the wearing of mustaches has become such a general custom, the subject was brought before Conference for consideration, and decided by a large majority that our brethren should not wear them.

**Time of Holding Conference.**—The time of holding our Conferences is hereby changed to the second Friday in May, and October of each year.

Conference closed with the usual exercises.

### CONFERENCE, MAY, 1881

Conference met at the Bank Church (Central District), May 13th and 14th, 1881. Members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Roth, I. Grove, S. Shank, G. D. Heatwole, G. Brunk, A. Wenger, J. F. Heatwole, C. Brunk, J. N. Driver, J. Geil, D. H. Landes, A. Burkholder, S. S. Weaver.—13.

**Deacons:**—M. Shank, J. Showalter, D. H. Good, F. A. Rhodes, S. Heatwole, J. Geil,—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

Conference opened as usual.

**Members Moving to Another Congregation.**—Decided that members changing congregations should take with them a certificate of membership.

Nothing further reported from this Conference.

### CONFERENCE, OCTOBER, 1881

Conference held at Trissels Church (Lower District), October 14th and 15th, 1881. Conference members present:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank, J. Geil.—4.

**Ministers:**—D. Showalter, J. N. Driver, G. D. Heatwole, J. F. Heatwole, D. Mellinger, Jacob Teats, of Hardy county, W. Va., P. S. Heatwole, A. Wenger, A. Burkholder, D. S. Heatwole, S. Shank, D. H. Landes, G. Brunk, J. Geil, S. Beery, S. S. Weaver.—16.

**Deacons:**—F. A. Rhodes, J. Good, J. Showalter, M. Shank, S. H. Weaver, D. H. Good, J. Geil, S. Heatwole, J. Landes.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 29.

**Call for a Deacon.**—Requested that a deacon be ordained in Frederick Co., Va. Granted.

**\*Breaking Bread.**—Decided that hereafter a minister or deacon break the bread for the officiating bishop.

**Time of Fall Conference.**—The time of the fall Conference is hereby changed from the second to the first Friday in October.

Conference adjourned in regular order.

### CONFERENCE, MAY, 1882

Conference at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), May 12th and 13th, 1882. Brethren present as follows:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—3.

\*Before the taking of this action it had been the rule for the bishop after invoking the blessing, to break the bread first to himself and then to his fellow ministers and the members of the congregation. The same rule also held with the cup, first drinking from it himself, and then passed it to the others.

This change provides for the bishop to first break bread to a fellow minister or deacon. Then the minister or deacon so served breaks it to the bishop, who then proceeds as before to all others.

**Ministers:**—I. Grove, C. Brunk, J. R. Hildebrand, D. S. Heatwole, S. Shank, A. Wenger, G. D. Heatwole, J. N. Driver, J. Geil, D. H. Landes, S. S. Weaver, A. Burkholder, J. F. Heatwole, D. Mellinger.—14.

**Deacons:**—S. H. Weaver, J. Landes, J. Geil, J. Showalter, John Witmer, M. Shank.—6.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

Opening services were as usual.

**Call for Deacons.**—Permission was asked to ordain two deacons in Central District. Granted.

**Single Brethren for Minister.**—The subject of taking single brethren into the lot for minister was discussed.

Conference closed.

### CONFERENCE, OCTOBER, 1882

Conference at the Pike Church (Central District), October 6th and 7th, 1882. Members as follows:

**Bishops:**—J. Geil, J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—I. Grove, D. S. Heatwole, A. Burkholder, S. Shank, A. Wenger, J. R. Hildebrand, J. F. Heatwole, D. Showalter, J. N. Driver, S. Beery, J. Geil, C. Brunk, D. H. Landes, P. S. Heatwole, G. Brunk.—15.

**Deacons:**—D. H. Good, S. Heatwole, J. Landes, J. Geil, F. A. Rhodes, M. Shank, J. Showalter.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

**Single Brethren for Minister or Deacon.**—Bishop A. Shank asked permission to take single men into the lot for minister or deacon, passed Conference by over two-thirds majority, upon which it was decided to submit the same to vote in the churches throughout the valley.

**Church Statistics.**—This matter was considered and decided that it be the bishop's duty to make church statistics to the Government when asked for.

**Certificates of Standing.**—The requirement of certificates from members of other Churches as formerly passed by Conference is hereby limited to mean those only who are entire strangers.

**Visiting Members.**—Visiting members was discussed and decided that it be the bishop's duty to visit, or have visited, all the members of their several districts.

**Sacrament and Feet-Washing.**—For certain reasons it was decided that hereafter we observe the ordinance of feet-washing immediately after the administration of the Sacrament, and not give a recess as has been the custom of our church in the valley. And also hereby make it the duty of the deacons to see that members take the front seats in the Church so as to avoid, as much as possible, all confusion during the administration, etc.

Conference closed.

### CONFERENCE, MAY, 1883

Conference at Brennemans Church (Lower District), May 11th and 12th, 1883. The following members were in attendance:

**Bishops:**—S. Coffman, John Geil, Sr., A. Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Roth, D. Mellinger, C. Brunk, D. Showalter, D. S. Heatwole, G. D. Heatwole, S. Beery, A. B. Burkholder, A. B. Wenger, J. Geil, D. H. Landes, P. S. Heatwole, S. F. Weaver, J. N. Driver.—14.

**Deacons:**—J. Showalter, D. E. Rhodes, D. H. Good, Jacob Geil, F. A. Rhodes, M. Shank, J. Landes, S. H. Weaver, John Whitmer.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons, 26.

Conference met at 9 o'clock and began services by the use of first hymn in supplement and followed by prayer.

**Rules of Conference.**—Rules of Conference were read by moderator.

**A Letter.**—Bishop J. Hildebrand not being present a letter was read from him. Also the following Scriptures, 1 Cor. 1, and 14:10.

**Admonitions.**—Appropriate admonitions were now delivered by bishops, Coffman, Geil, and Shank, followed by the ministers and deacons; all upon the duty of Ministers, etc.

**Query, Baptism.**—Is it in accordance with the Scriptures and divine truth and in accordance with our faith and practice of close communion and non-resistance to receive into our Church, members from other Churches without re-baptizing them? Laid aside.

**Musical Instruments.**—Is it consistent for the followers of Christ Jesus to have musical instruments in their houses, or is it in accordance with the teachings of Christ and his apostles? Laid over.

**Mutual Society.**—Will it be consistent with the teachings of Christ for the brotherhood to form a mutual society? Decided in the negative.

**Baptism Again.**—The first question of yesterday was again taken up and spoken upon for some time and again laid aside.

Dismissed by singing and prayer.

### CONFERENCE, OCTOBER, 1883

Conference at Kindig's Church (Upper District), October 5th and 6th, 1883. The following members were present:

**Bishops:**—J. Hildebrand, S. Coffman, A. Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—I. Grove, J. R. Hildebrand, S. Beery, D. H. Landes, A. B. Burkholder, D. S. Heatwole, G. D. Heatwole, S. S. Weaver, J. F. Heatwole, C. Brunk, G. Brunk, A. Wenger, S. Shank.—13.

**Deacons:**—M. Shank, S. H. Weaver, J. Landes, J. Geil, D. H. Good, D. E. Rhodes, F. A. Rhodes.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

**Opening Exercises.**—Conference opened by reading and prayer. The reading consisted of 2 Cor. 4.

**Admonitions.**—Admonitions were now given by the bishops followed by the ministers and deacons in their turn.

**Home Mission Fund.**—This subject was introduced by Bishop Coffman, the object of which was to form some plan by which a minister's work is being done at home while he is from home preaching the gospel. After much discussion it was placed upon its passage, but voted down by a large majority. It was urged, however, that it is the duty of members to see that such work is done while ministers are thus engaged, though no special plan is adopted.

**Arbitrations.**—We are opposed to using the law to adjust difficulties between parties, hence it is decided that when financial difficulties arise between members, in which they fail to adjust themselves, it shall be referred to two or more arbitrators, to be mutually chosen by the contending parties. The said arbitrators are to make their decision according to justice without knowing by whom either of them was chosen. And their decision is to be reduced to

writing and placed upon record. It was also decided that ministers of the gospel should not serve as arbitrators.

**Conference Minutes.**—This subject was discussed, and decided to publish Conference minutes. See Preface.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop A. Shank asked permission to ordain one or two ministers in his district. Granted.

Bro. A. Shank also asked to have a minister ordained in Hardy county, W. Va. Decided that it is not expedient at the present time.

**Non-resistance.**—The conclusion of Conference consisted of addresses upon the non-resistant doctrine by Bishop Coffman and others.

### CONFERENCE, MAY, 1884

Conference met at Weavers Church (Central District), May 9th, 1884, with members present as follows:

**Bishops:**—John Geil, Sr., Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, A. Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Showalter, Daniel H. Mellinger, Gabriel D. Heatwole, C. Brunk, D. S. Heatwole, A. B. Wenger, S. S. Weaver, A. B. Burkholder, S. Beery, J. S. Coffman, P. S. Heatwole, G. Brunk, J. N. Driver, I. Grove, D. H. Landes, S. S. Shank, Lewis Shank, Henry Wenger.—18.

**Deacons:**—J. Good, J. Geil, J. Whitmer, C. Good, S. Heatwole, D. E. Rhodes, S. H. Weaver, D. H. Good, Jacob Landes, J. Showalter, M. Shank, F. A. Rhodes.—12.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 34

Conference opened at 9 o'clock sharp, by the reading of the rules of Conference by moderator, followed by singing, prayer and reading Paul's first letter to the Corinthians.

Admonitions by members of Conference now followed, after which the following subjects for consideration were presented by moderator as received by him.

increasing from year to year the following query presents itself as a timely one, viz., Can we not devise means by which business in our Conference can be transacted more systematically and thereby economize much in the use of time? After much comment and suggestion of plans the following was adopted.

*Resolved* 1. For reasons stated, that we appoint a committee consisting of one member from each of the three districts to whom all business for Conference shall be referred and whose duty it shall be to receive all such matter, to put in proper form, if necessary, and to frame and attach a suitable answer for the same.

*Resolved* 2. That any member having business for Conference be required to reduce the same to writing (plainly stated) and to send it to a member of said committee as early as practicable, in no case later than one month before Conference.

**Committee of Reference.**—A vote resulted in the choice of the following brethren as the above named committee, Joseph N. Driver (Upper District), Daniel S. Heatwole (Central District), and Samuel Shank (Lower District).

**Debating Societies.**—Inasmuch as Debating societies are now so common an institution it is desired that Conference consider whether, or not, it is consistent for brethren to take part in them? Decided inconsistent.

**The Beard.**—We are commanded to be a separate people from the world hence we think it very inexpedient to be constantly changing our external appearance in the form of our apparel, beard, etc., and as custom has adopted so many ways of cutting and shaping the beard and whose ways are constantly changing, we, the members of this Conference, do strongly urge our dear brethren, desiring to wear the beard, the importance of adopting a plain mode and adhering to that.

**Plain Clothing.**—B. A. Hadsell, of Illinois, has now made arrangements to furnish plain clothing to all those who desire them. We regard this a move in the right direction. And we do hereby again strongly urge our brethren to wear plain clothing for reasons often assigned.

**Pride.**—By our own experiences in connection with the experiences of others we are prompted to again speak plainly on this subject. We have heard from ministers of other Churches expressions of regret that pride made such inroads into their Churches. Why not then urge the brethren and sisters to take warning of the danger to which it is leading? Let the dear young sisters be earnestly admonished to make their caps plain with narrow strings as becometh those who profess to have denied the world and are following Christ in Lumbleness of heart.

**Anointing with Oil.**—The subject of anointing with oil, as spoken of by James 5:14, was discussed at length. Much was said for and against its literal signification, and what the duty of the elders is when called upon for that purpose. And also, if to anoint, what kind of oil to use. It was finally dismissed without any final conclusion.

**Query.**—Would it be expedient to ordain a bishop in the Winchester branch of the Church? Decided not expedient.

**Collections.**—Is it expedient to hold public collections to defray ministers' traveling expenses? Question tabled.

**Call for Deacon.**—Bishop A. Shank asked permission to ordain one or two deacons in his district. Granted.

**Next Conference** to be held at Trissels Church (Lower District), the first Friday in October, 1884.

**Reading Minutes.**—The minutes of former Conferences were read.

Conference closed with singing and prayer.

## CONFERENCE, OCTOBER, 1884

Conference met at Trissels Church (Lower District), October 3rd and 4th, 1884. Opened Friday morning at nine o'clock.

Michael Shank, Moderator. David H. Landis, Secretary.

Devotional exercises, 174th hymn, Rom. 12th chapter and prayer.

Admonitions by bishops Coffman, Hildebrand and Shank.

Ministers and deacons all responded in turn, speaking of the various duties devolving upon each.

### Friday Afternoon

Devotional exercises, 32nd hymn in supplement and prayer.

Moderator declared conference ready for business.

**Proceedings of Conference.**—Is it expedient to publish the proceedings of conference before they are ratified by the church?

*Resolved*, Not to publish them before they are ratified.

**Call for Deacon.**—Bishop Hildebrand asked permission to ordain one or two deacons in the Upper District. Granted.

**Invitations to our Ministers.**—If our ministers are invited by ministers of other denominations to take part with them in their ministry, is it right for them to do so? Decided that they should be careful as to when and where.

**Wine for Communion.**—Is there any evidence in scripture as to what kind of wine should be used at the time of communion? Decided that it should be grape wine.

**\*Missionary Fund.**—Does this conference advise that we have a missionary fund? Decided we do not think it advisable.

**Ministers Who do not Expect to Commune.**—Is it right for a minister to take his seat on the stand at a communion meeting when he does not intend to commune? Decided we think it wrong, because he would not be an example to the flock according to I Peter 5:3.

**Offenders to Make Restitution.**—When a brother is found in error by taking advantage of his fellow-man, and the church requires an acknowledgement of him should he not make the money good before acknowledgment is made? Decided that he should as far as possible.

**Applicants to Conform in Dress.**—When persons apply for membership in the church should not the bishop lay before them the importance of conforming to the usages of the church in the way of dress? Decided that the bishop should so instruct them.

**Call for Deacon.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission to ordain a deacon in West Virginia. Granted.

Conference closed with prayer and singing hymn 179.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Samuel Coffman, Jacob Hildebrand, Abraham Shank.—3

**Ministers:**—John Geil, Daniel Showalter, Samuel Shank, George Brunk, Sem. S. Weaver, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, David H. Landes, Abram B. Burkholder, Solomon Beery, Henry Wenger, Abram B. Wenger, Lewis Shank, Isaac Grove, Jos. N. Driver, Christian Brunk, Daniel Mellinger, Daniel Roth, of Maryland.—19.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Christian Good, Daniel H. Good, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Peter Blosser, Christian Shank, Michael Shank, Jacob Good, Jacob Landes.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 32.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1885

Conference met at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), May 8th and 9th, 1885. Opened Friday morning at nine o'clock.

Michael Shank, Moderator. David H. Landis, Secretary.

Devotional exercises, Singing, Psalm 50 and prayer.

Admonitions by Bishops Hildebrand, Coffman and Shank.

Ministers and deacons in the usual order spoke earnestly with reference to the need of renewed energy on their part to advance the cause of Christ and to win souls for his kingdom.

\*Mission Boards authorized to maintain mission funds were fully sanctioned by later sessions of the conference.

### Friday Afternoon

Devotional exercises, singing and prayer.

Moderator declared conference ready for business.

**Choosing Arbitrators:**—If brethren and sisters have difficulty in settling financial matters, should they be confined to the church membership only in choosing arbitrators? Decided that they should be confined to the church according to I Cor. 6th chapter.

**Acknowledgments, to Whom Made.**—When a member violates the rules of the church and an acknowledgment is required by the church would it not be better for the transgressor to make his own statement and ask pardon, than for the bishop to make the statement? Rejected.

**Difficulties between Members.**—If a member has a difficulty with another, should they not, after Matt. 18 has been complied with, be required to bring their complaint direct to the bishop? Decided that they should bring it to the bishop.

### Saturday Forenoon

Devotional exercises; Singing; Ephesians, 4th chapter and prayer.

Moderator announced conference ready for further business.

**\*Objectionable Clause in former Conference.**—In Minutes of Conference for September, 1869, where the query appears, "Is it right to report a thief to the civil authorities," the following correction is made: "Is it right for a member of Christ's Church to volunteer as a police officer to arrest a thief."

**Application for Membership.**—When names of applicants for membership are published, would it not be well to ask them to remain for instruction after the regular service, and at the same time invite others to remain with them also as applicants for membership? Decided in the affirmative.

**Present System of conducting Conference.**—The present system of conducting conference not being agreeable to all its members, it was ordered that hereafter arranging committees plan the questions without framing an answer to them beforehand.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop Shank asked permission to ordain a minister in Hardy county, West Virginia. Granted.

**Proceedings of Conference.**—It was agreed that Abram Blosser be allowed to print the conference proceedings and to get his pay through their sale to such as may desire them.

Conference adjourned with prayer and singing.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Jos. N. Driver, Christian Brunk, A. B. Burkholder, Jos. F. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, Abram B. Wenger, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, David H. Landis, Samuel Shank, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Isaac Grove, John Geil, Solomon Beery, Daniel Mellinger, Sem S. Weaver, Daniel Roth, of Maryland and Philip H. Parret of Pennsylvania.—18.

**Deacons:**—Samuel Weaver, Jacob Landis, Christian Good, John Whitmer, Daniel H. Good.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

\*This apparent error or oversight appearing on the records of this conference was not discovered until after the pamphlet of 1884, containing proceedings of conference up until that year, was printed and had gone into general circulation among the brotherhood. This accounts for the correction being made at so late a date.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1885

Conference met at the Kernstown Church (Winchester District), October 2nd and 3rd, 1885. Opened Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

Joseph N. Driver, Moderator. David H. Landis, Secretary.

Devotional Exercises: Singing: Rom. 12 chapter, and prayer.

Admonitions by bishops Hildebrand, Coffman and Shank. Each spoke earnestly upon the important duties of the ministry.

Ministers and deacons each responded as customary to their call—each one feeling very sensibly the duties and responsibilities resting upon them. Jos. N. Driver and Daniel S. Heatwole chosen Moderators..

## Friday Afternoon

Devotional Exercises: Singing and prayer.

Moderator declared conference ready for business.

**Call for Deacons:**—Bishop Hildebrand asked permission to ordain two deacons in Upper district. Granted.

**Correcting Mistakes in Minutes.**—Conference agreed upon a form for correcting errata that may occur in the minutes, and that such correcting may be made on the margin of the page where it occurs.

**Treatment of restored Members.**—Members, who by transgression have caused general pain and grief to the church, after having given satisfaction and become reconciled, should not general friendship and love be again manifested toward them? Decided in the affirmative.

**Croquet Games and Ten-pin-alley Rolling.**—Inasmuch as these forms of worldly amusement are become so prevalent should we not protest against members indulging in them or allowing them among them? Decided that we enter our protest against both games.

## Saturday Forenoon

Devotional Exercises: Singing; I Cor. 12th chapter, and prayer.

Daniel S. Heatwole as moderator declared conference ready for business.

**Conference Minutes.**—Decided not to print them to be sent abroad in the world, that they be correctly recorded in a book and kept within the limits of the church.

**Harvest Meetings.**—Should not our Harvest meetings be held uniformly on the same date in each of the districts? Decided that Harvest meetings be held in the districts on the 3rd Thursday of August, each year.

Conference closed with prayer and singing.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman and Abram Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Daniel S. Heatwole, Jos. N. Driver, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Solomon Beery, David H. Landis, Abram B. Burkholder, George Brunk, John Geil, Christian Brunk, Daniel Mellinger, Abram B. Wenger, Philip H. Parret, of Pennsylvania, Henry H. Good, of Ohio.—14.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Christian Good, Daniel H. Good, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Landis, John Whitmer, Jacob A. Greider, of Pennsylvania.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR APRIL, 1886

Conference met at Brannemans Church (Lower District), May 14th and 15th. Opened Friday morning at nine o'clock.

Joseph N. Driver, Moderator. David H. Landis, Secretary.

Devotional Exercises: Singing; 2 Cor. 4th chapter, and prayer.

Admonition given by Bishop Samuel Coffman who was the only bishop present during the opening exercises—the others being delayed on the way to conference by reason of the heavy thunder showers and high waters that prevailed during the morning and forenoon.

Ministers and deacons spoke in turn as called upon.

**Friday Afternoon**

Devotional Exercises: Singing and prayer.

Conference proceeded to business.

**Statements by Offending Members.**—Should an offending member have privilege to make statement to the church? Decided that cases of contention and strife between members be inquired into by the deacons and reduced to writing and same then be reported to the church.

**Applicants for Membership.**—Should not all applicants for membership be instructed distinctly and carefully that they must comply with Matt. 18th chapter in all matters of complaint before they can be heard by the church officials? Decided in the affirmative.

**Leavened Bread.**—Is it in accordance with God's word to use leavened bread for sacramental purposes? Decided that we use same bread as before—with leaven.

**Worldly Conventions.**—Is it consistent for a brother to accept an appointment to a worldly convention? Decided in negative.

**Marriage Ceremonies.**—In cases where our children are married to persons not members of the church would it not be better for our bishops to unite them in matrimony rather than to call a minister from another denomination to perform the ceremony?

Decided to continue as before; that our bishops marry such couples where both are members of the church.

**Divorce.**—Does Christ's mention of the cause for a man putting away his wife, mean that they are separated the same as though they had never been married? Decided that he mentions a cause for putting her away.

**Time of Feet-Washing.**—Should our members be engaged in the ordinance of feet-washing before the close of the customary address on that subject? Decided not to engage in the ordinance while the speaking is in progress, so that all may hear what is said.

**\*Birth Day Parties.**—Should professors of religion take any part in birthday parties and such like? Decided not right.

**The Mustache.**—Reference was made to a previous conference where protest was made against brethren wearing the mustache. Same re-affirmed in this conference explanations were made by bishops.

Jos. N. Driver and Emmanuel Suter were elected moderator and secretary

\*Birth-day parties of this period had become very popular and because of their irreligious nature and the rivalry and excess in the way of giving presents, accounts in great part for the conference raising its protest against them.

respectively by ballot for the next two years—it having been previously decided that the moderator be chosen from the conference body, and the secretary from the laymen outside said body.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, John Geil, Abram Shank.—4.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Showalter, George Brunk, Samuel Shank, Lewis Shank, Christian Brunk, Daniel Mellinger, Henry Wenger, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Peter S. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, David H. Landis, Sem S. Weaver, Solomon Beery, Abram B. Burkholder, Abram B. Wenger, Isaac Grove, Jacob R. Hildebrand, John Geil, Jos. N. Driver, Daniel Roth, of Maryland.—21.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Christian Good, Daniel H. Good, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Showalter, Jacob Landis, Martin Brunk, Anthony P. Heatwole, Peter Blosser, Jacob Geil, Christian Shank.—11.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 36.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1886

Conference met at the Springdale Church (Upper District), October 1st and 2nd, 1886. Opened Firday morning at nine o'clock.

Joseph N. Driver, Moderator. Emmanuel Suter, Secretary.

Admonitions by Bishops Hildebrand, Coffman, Shank and Hunsbery, of Pennsylvania—the latter spoke of the difference in manner of conducting conference here and where he was at home, yet felt greatly pleased with the change.

Ministers and deacons all responded in earnest talks after being called on in turn by Deacon Fred A. Rhodes.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Coffman asked the privilege to ordain one or two ministers in Middle District. Granted.

**Fairs.**—Should members be allowed to take part in conducting fairs? Decided, not to be allowed. Should they be allowed to exhibit goods at a fair? Decided again that they should not.

**Open Violations.**—Should not members who openly violate the gospel be required to make a public acknowledgment, or at least before the body of the church according to I Tim. 5:20? "Them that sin rebuke before all." Answer—To rebuke a member means to expell him from the church: To be restored, he should make acknowledgment before the body of the church.

**Call for Minister.**—Bishop Hildebrand requests permission to ordain a minister in Upper District. Granted.

Conference closed with singing the 60th hymn and prayer.

Members present:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, John B. Hunsbery, of Pennsylvania.—4.

**Ministers:**—Daniel Mellinger, Christian Brunk, Jos. N. Driver, Isaac Grove, Jacob R. Hildebrand, John Geil, Samuel Shank, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Abram P. Wenger, Abram B. Burkholder, David H. Landis, Sem S. Weaver, Solomon Beery, Peter S. Heatwole, —— Wisman, of Pennsylvania.—17.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Simeon Heatwole, David E. Rhodes, Christian Good, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Landis, Samuel Weaver, Anthony P. Heatwole, Martin Brunk.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 30.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1887

Conference convened at Weavers Church (Middle District), May 13th and 14th, 1887. Opened exercises at 9 o'clock Friday morning.

Joseph N. Driver, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.

Admonitions by bishops, Hildebrand, Coffman, Shank and Geil. The aged bishops Hildebrand and Geil gave earnest exhortation to all younger members of conference to be faithful to the charge committed to them.

Ministers and deacons responded as they were called upon by Deacon Fred A. Rhodes.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Hildebrand asked permission to ordain two ministers in Upper District. Granted.

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Coffman renews request made at the former conference for permission to ordain two ministers in Middle District. Granted.

**Selling Cider or Wine.**—Should a member be allowed to sell strong cider or wine to minors or persons who they know to become intoxicated? Decided that it is wrong to do so.

**Administration of Oath or Affirmation.**—Can a member hold such a position in worldly affairs that require the administration of an oath or affirmation? Decided not right to hold such position.

**The Lord's Prayer—When to be used.**—Is it obligatory for our ministers to close all public prayers with the Lord's prayer; if so what is the rule that requires it? Answer—This conference leaves it optional with the minister to use it or omit it in public prayer.

**The New Hymn Book.**—Would this conference authorize the publishing of a new hymn book with our hymns set to music with a selection of such other hymns as may be suitable for public worship and Sunday Schools? Decided in the affirmative.

**The New Hymn Book Committee.**—On motion conference chose a committee of three who were to act as corresponding committee to write to the various churches in the United States and Canada inviting co-operation with this conference in the work. The committee was chosen by ballot as follows: Samuel Shank, Emanuel Suter and C. H. Brunk.

**Announcing Time of Conference.**—On motion the secretary of this conference is authorized to publish through the church papers the time and place of meeting of each conference in future.

Conference closed with prayer and singing of the 56th hymn.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abraham Shank, John Geil.—4.

**Ministers:**—Jos. N. Driver, Christian Brunk, Daniel S. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, Sem S. Weaver, Jos. F. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, David H. Landis, Solomon Beery, George Brunk, Abram B. Wenger, Samuel Shank, Peter S. Heatwole, John Geil, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Isaac Grove, Lewis Shank, Henry Wenger.—18.

**Deacons:**—Samuel Weaver, Michael Shank, Martin Brunk, Christian Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Jacob Showalter, Daniel H. Good, Christian Good, Peter Blosser, Jacob Landis, David E. Rhodes, Simeon Heatwole, Jacob Geil, Fred A. Rhodes.—14.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 36.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1887

Conference assembled at Zion Church (Lower District), October 7th and 8th, 1887. Opening exercises Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

Moderator, Joseph N. Driver. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

Admonitions by Bishops Hildebrand, Coffman, Shank and Geil.

Ministers and deacons all gave exhortation in turn as called upon by Deacon Fred A. Rhodes.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Signing Assessment Blanks.**—Bishop Coffman gave general caution to the brotherhood concerning the affixing of names to assessment blanks after the statements: "solemnly swear," or, "so help me God."

**Coffins for Poor Members.**—When the church is expected to pay for coffins would it not be expedient for the conference to fix a uniform price? Decided that six dollars (\$6.00) be paid out of church fund for such purposes.

**Collection of Claims by Law.**—Can a brother who acts as administrator for an estate be allowed to use the law in settlement of claims that cannot be otherwise collected? Decided that where loss would otherwise be sustained a brother may use the law under such circumstances.

**Brethren who Refuse to go into the Lot.**—Can such be consistently held in full communion with the church? Decided that it is the church's duty to exercise forbearance and retain them in full standing.

**Taking Sacrament with other Denominations.**—How shall the church deal with a member who communes with other denominations, after being kindly entreated not to do so yet justifies himself in continuing in that course? A prolonged discussion of the subject brought forth the following answer: "According to our understanding of the Word of God it is inconsistent for members of our church to commune with other denominations."

**Arranging Committee.**—Jacob R. Hildebrand, Daniel S. Heatwole and Samuel Shank were chosen by ballot as the new arranging committee.

**Report of New Hymn Book Committee,**—consisted in this much that the new Hymnal is favorable but that as yet not a sufficient degree of encouragement had been received from the churches elsewhere to begin the work.

Conference closed with prayer and singing the 2nd hymn in the supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, John Geil.—4.

**Ministers:**—Jos. N. Driver, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Christian Brunk, Samuel Shank, Isaac Grove, Henry Wenger, Solomon Beery, George Brunk, Christian Good, Daniel S. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, Joseph Hashbarger, Daniel Mellinger, Peter S. Heatwole, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, John Geil, Abram B. Wenger, David H. Landis, Lewis Shank.—22.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Christian Shank, John Whitmer, Samuel Weav-

er, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Landis, Jacob Geil, Jacob Showalter, David E. Rhodes, Peter Blosser, Fred A. Rhodes.—11.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 37.

(On the 6th day of January 1888 there was a called Session of the Conference held at Weaver's church which took into consideration the New Hymn Book Matter. The business transacted consisted in making outline plans for the size of the book, the number of hymns, omitting of certain stanzas of the longer hymns, the selection of new hymns and tunes; and last of all the election of a compiling committee. For the latter: Samuel Shank, C. H. Brunk and Emanuel Suter were elected by ballot.)

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1888

Conference met at Springdale Church (Upper District), May 11th and 12th, 1888. Opening exercises Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

Moderator, Joseph N. Driver. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

Admonition by Bishops Coffman and Shank—a brief letter from Bishop Jacob Hildebrand stated that he was unable to attend conference by reason of failing health.

Ministers and deacons made short addresses in such good form that all felt edified and encouraged therefrom.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Customs at Funerals.**—Is it not inconsistent with the solemnity of the hour to give general invitation from the pulpit at time of a funeral to return to the home of the mourning family for refreshments? Decided not consistent with the occasion.

**Call for the Ordination of a Bishop.**—Through a note from Bishop Jacob Hildebrand and read by Bishop Coffman, request was made for the ordination of a bishop in the Upper district. Granted.

**Choosing of Moderator and Secretary.**—In choosing officers for conference in next two years, Samuel Shank was made moderator and Emanuel Suter secretary.

**Attendance at Conference.**—An earnest plea is hereby entered by this conference body that every member thereof should be present at all its sessions, as far as possible, and to allow no secular matter to prohibit them from doing so. Above was adopted by unanimous vote.

**Publishing Expelled Members.**—As it is the rule to publish the names of all applicants for membership, would it not be fully as important to publish names of persons who are expelled or have withdrawn from the church? Decided that names of all such persons be announced publicly as having been expelled or are withdrawn from the church.

**\*The New Hymn & Tune Book,**—formed a topic for discussion. Bro. Henry S. Rupp, of Pennsylvania and member of the Compiling Committee to

\*It was at about this period that what is now known as "THE OLD PEOPLE'S SONG SERVICE" was established with the Weavers church congregation in Middle district. The following report, which appeared in *The Gospel Witness* of January 1906 shows the nature of these meetings.

"The Old People's Singing," which has every once and awhile—at intervals of from two to three years apart—been held by the Weavers congregation in Rockingham county, Virginia: again materialized in good form on New Year's Day. As the roads were good and the weather especially fine, the fathers and mothers, the grandfathers and grandmothers of the community, ranging in age from 35 to 80 years, turned out in goodly number, each bearing his or her

represent the Lancaster Conference proposed that the original stereotype plates be made church property and that the Publishing house that prints them be paid a per cent for printing and binding.

The Lancaster proposition was accepted by this conference.

**Secret Organizations.**—On motion it was resolved that this conference reiterates its protest against all secret organizations which includes the Farmer's Alliance now so much in vogue.

Conference adjourned with prayer and singing the 55th hymn.

(Promptly at 2 o'clock public services began when at the close of the sermon Preacher Joseph N. Driver was ordained to the office of bishop, by the laying on of hands of the two bishops present, Coffman and Shank. Bro. Driver was called to this important office by the united voice of the church in Upper district, and the ordination service, as conducted in the presence of the church and the conference, was peculiarly solemn).

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank.—2.

**Ministers:**—Jos. N. Driver, Samuel Shank, Isaac Grove, Abram B. Burkholder, Jos. F. Heatwole, John Geil, Abram B. Wenger, Solomon Beery, Christian Good, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Peter S. Heatwole, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Joseph Hashbarger.—14.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Samuel Weaver, Martin Brunk, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Landis, Peter Blosser, David E. Rhodes, Fred A. Rhodes, Christian Shank, Henry S. Rupp, of Pennsylvania.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1888

Conference convened at the Bank Church (Middle District), October 5th and 6th, 1888. Opening exercises Friday morning at nine o'clock.

Moderator, Samuel Shank. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

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copy of The Harmonia Sacra—a work that was published by Joseph Funk & Sons of Singers Glen, Virginia, early in the fifties.

This song book was then, and is yet being considered by many as one of the best collections of hymns ever introduced into this section of the state; and as a hand-book on church music,—none had been more extensively in use among Mennonites in Virginia, previous to the year 1876, with which year the work went out of publication after having run through perhaps 18 or 20 editions.

The exercises were begun with scriptural reading and prayer, after which the singers were arranged after the manner of the old time classes—with the basses and tenors to the right of the leader, and the altos and sopranos to the left.

The grand and never-to-be-worn-out old harmonies were selected and sung after the following order: "Old Hundred, Benevento, Wesley" Greenfields, Utica, Lingham, Archdale, Voice of Peace, Star of Bethlehem, Royal Proclamation, and many others—while the anthems; such as: "Jerusalem My Glorious Home, Easter Anthem, Heavenly Vision, Gospel Illumination, and Farewell Anthem" were sung with the same earnestness and "joist lifting" zeal so characteristic of the singers of 40 and 50 years ago.

Though forenoon and afternoon sessions were held, there was not near time enough to use all the selections—some having been sent in by individuals who were not able to be there in person. The day served to recall many pleasant recollections of the long cherished past, when the great wave of sacred song swept through the Shenandoah Valley and made many singing families, in which the love of sacred song has never since ceased to exist.

Another feature of the meeting and perhaps the one most painfully felt by all was the personal absence and inspiration of many singers of former days, who have either removed to distant lands, or gone to join the choir above."

Bishops Coffman, Shank and Driver made usual admonitions.

Ministers and deacons spoke in the interests and welfare of one another and the prosperity of the church as called upon by Deacon Fred A. Rhodes.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Points On Confession of Faith.**—The importance of having the introductory part, and note attached to 21st article of The Confession of Faith read to our congregations at least once a year was under consideration, but was deferred till the next conference.

**The Wearing of Watch-chains** by members and ministers was warmly discussed and was decided that such be dealt with in accordance with resolutions adopted at conferences of September 1877 and April 1878.

**Marrying First Cousins.**—Is it in accordance with New Testament scriptures for members of the church of Christ to marry their first cousins?

Decided that the New Testament is silent on this point, but the conference would advise against such marriages.

Conference adjourned with prayer and singing 34th hymn in supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Jos. N. Driver.—3.

**Ministers:**—Jacob R. Hildebrand, Christian Brunk, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Christian Good, Abram B. Wenger, John Geil, Jos. F. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Solomon Beery, George Brunk, Samuel Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Peter S. Heatwole, Daniel Mellinger, Sem S. Weaver, Lewis Shank, Joseph Hashbarger, Samuel Bauman, of Canada, Abram B. Burkholder.—20.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Simeon Heatwole, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Geil, Jacob Showalter, Christian Shank, Peter Blosser, Samuel Weaver, Jacob Landis, Fred A. Rhodes.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 33.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1889

Conference met at Brannemans Church (Lower District), May 10th and 11th, 1889. Opening exercises Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

Moderator, Samuel Shank. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

Exhortations by bishops Coffman, Hildebrand, Shank and Driver.

Ministers and deacons all responded in turn briefly stating their willingness to faithfully perform their several duties.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Series of Meetings.**—The question of series of meetings in our churches was presented by Bishop Abram Shank who made mention that more than three meetings at a time at one place had been held since last conference contrary to a general understanding that after the third meeting at one place, such meetings should close.

After the discussion had been continued for some time, in which much was said on both sides, it was agreed that all return to matters as they stood at the last conference—nothing to be required of anyone.

**Obscene Matters.**—Should the particulars of a case that is of an obscene nature be generally reported to the church for action?

Decided that it shall be the duty of the ministers and deacons to meet in regular counsel to decide such cases among themselves.

**The Twenty-ninth Article of our Confession of Faith.**—The shunning or avoiding of excommunicated members not being practiced with our people in Virginia as in other states, what would this conference recommend as a plan for giving satisfaction to such members who may inquire for the reason it is not so practiced here?

Decided that a committee of three brethren be appointed to answer all such inquiries. The following brethren were elected by ballot: Abram Shank, Daniel S. Heatwole, Jos. N. Driver.

Conference closed with prayer and singing 39th hymn in supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Joseph N. Driver.—4.

**Ministers:**—Christian Brunk, Henry Wenger, Samuel Shank, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Daniel S. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, Sem S. Weaver, Daniel Mellinger, John Geil, Peter S. Heatwole, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Joseph Hashbarger, Lewis J. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Christian Good, Solomon Beery, Anthony P. Heatwole, Abram B. Wenger, Lewis Shank.—19.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Fred A. Rhodes, Daniel H. Good, Christ Shank, Martin Brunk, Peter Blosser, Jacob Landis, Samuel Weaver, Simeon Heatwole.—11.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 34.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1889

Conference met at Hildebrands Church (Upper District), October 4th and 5th, 1889. Opening service at 9 o'clock in the morning.

Moderator, Samuel Shank. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

Admonitions by Bishops Hildebrand, Coffman and Driver.

Ministers and deacons responded in turn to the call of Deacon Jacob Landis.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Careless and Indifferent Members.**—Subject, after being discussed at some length, it was decided that bishops, ministers and deacons show special care for all such and to visit them in brotherly kindness.

**Members under Censure.**—What shall be done with members who are unwilling to make acknowledgment when the church by her action requires it? For answer, to this question, the resolution of the conference of April 1874 is referred to, which is as follows: "Decided that in cases when the church requires an acknowledgment of erring members, it shall be the duty of the deacons to specify a time in which such acknowledgment shall be made."

This conference then adopted as a finishing clause to the above resolution, the following: And if they then fail to do so they shall be expelled from the church.

Conference closed with prayer and singing of hymn 329.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops.**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Jos. N. Driver.—3.

**Ministers.**—Christian Brunk, Christian Good, Abram B. Burkholder, Abram B. Wenger, Samuel Shank, John Geil, Daniel S. Heatwole, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Daniel H. Mellinger, Solomon Beery, Jos. F. Heatwole.—11.

**Deacons.**—Daniel H. Good, Michael Shank, Jacob Landis.—3.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 17.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1890

Conference assembled at Weavers Church (Middle District), May 9th and 10th, 1890. Opening exercises Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

**Moderator**, Samuel Shank. **Secretary**, Emanuel Suter.

Admonitions from Bishops Coffman, Shank, Hildebrand, Driver and Shank, of Pennsylvania.

Ministers and deacons responded in earnest addresses as they were called upon in turn by Deacon Michael Shank.

## Friday Afternoon

**Call for Deacon**.—Bishop Coffman asked the privilege to ordain a deacon in the Winchester district. Granted.

**Written Sermons**.—Is it in harmony with the rules of the Mennonite Church for a minister to write off his sermons to preach or read to the congregation? Decided in the negative.

**Banning or Separating from the Excommunicated**.—Is banning or separating from the excommunicated member a command of the New Testament? If not why did the Mennonites of the 16th and 17th century so strenuously uphold it, and why is it admitted as an article in the Mennonite Confession of Faith? Laid over for next conference.

**Applicants Expelled From Other Churches**.—When receiving a person into our church who has been expelled from another church, is it consistent to receive such without baptism? Decided in the negative.

Election for Moderator for next two years resulted in a tie vote between Michael Shank and Christian Good. On motion both were ordered to serve. Emanuel Suter was elected Secretary and the arranging committee selected were Samuel Shank, Daniel S. Heatwole and Jacob R. Hildebrand.

**Rising for the Benediction**.—It was decided that the attitude of our congregations shall be that of standing while the benediction is pronounced at the close of public worship.

Conference closed with prayer and the use of the 55th hymn.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**:—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Jos. N. Driver, Daniel Shank, of Pennsylvania.—5.

**Ministers**:—Christian Brunk, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Daniel S. Heatwole, Daniel Mellinger, Lewis J. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Jacob R. Hildebrand, John Geil, Joseph Hashbarger, Sem S. Weaver, Anthony P. Heatwole, Samuel Shank, Abram B. Wenger, George Brunk, Christian Good, Abram B. Burkholder, Lewis Shank, Peter S. Heatwole, Adam Bear, of Maryland.—19.

**Deacons**:—Fred. A. Rhodes, Simeon Heatwole, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Jacob Geil, Daniel H. Good, Christian Shank, Michael Shank.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 32.

## MINUTES OF CONFERENCE OF OCTOBER 1890

Conference met at the Kernstown Church (Winchester District), October 3rd and 4th, 1890. Opening exercises Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

**Moderators**, Michael Shank and Christian Good. **Secretary**, Emanuel Suter.

Admonitions from Bishops Shank, Coffman and Hildebrand. Touching and appropriate remarks were made in memory of the lately departed Bishop

Joseph N. Driver whom death claimed just two months previous to the assembling of this conference.

Ministers and deacons responded at the call of Deacon Fred A. Rhodes.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Hildebrand requested permission to ordain two ministers in the Upper district. Granted.

**Call for Bishop.**—Bishop Hildebrand proposed to conference that a bishop be ordained in Middle district to assist the bishops in both the Upper and Middle districts. After much serious discussion, the matter was submitted to a vote and carried in favor of the affirmative.

**Call for Ministers.**—Bishop Coffman asked permission of conference to ordain two ministers in Middle district. Granted.

**Members who Fail to Attend Counsel-meetings.**—On motion it was decided to renew the action of the conference of October 1882 that provides that bishops shall visit or have visited all members in their districts, with the additional clause: Those who do not attend their counsel meetings.

**Time for Holding Harvest Meeting.**—On motion the time for holding the annual harvest meetings in the several districts is hereby changed from the third to the first Thursday in August.

Conference closed with prayer and the use of the 394th hymn.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Samuel Shank, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Daniel Mellinger, Abram B. Wenger, Anthony P. Heatwole, Christian Good, Isaac Grove, Christian Brunk, George Brunk, John Geil, Abram B. Burkholder, Joseph Hashbarger, Lewis Shank, Solomon Beery, Henry Wenger, Jos. F. Heatwole,—17.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Jacob Showalter, Jacob Landis, David E. Rhodes, Martin Brunk, Daniel H. Good, Christian Shank, Jacob Geil, Fred A. Rhodes, Isaac Eby, of Maryland, Michael Hege, of Pennsylvania.—11.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 31.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1891

Conference met at Springdale Church (Upper District), May 8th and 9th, 1891. Opening exercises Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

Moderators, Michael Shank and Christian Good. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

Bishops, Hildebrand, Coffman and Shank made their usual admonitions.

Ministers and deacons addressed the conference in turn as they were called.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Call for Deacons.**—Bishop Coffman asked the privilege of ordaining two deacons in Middle District. Granted.

**Call for Minister.**—The propriety of ordaining a minister in Winchester district was also seriously considered and on being submitted to vote; the privilege was granted.

**Combing and Cutting the Hair.**—Should members of this conference be allowed to cut and comb their hair after the fashion of the world? Referred to first and second resolutions of conference of September 1877.

**Deputy Assessor and Tax Collector.**—According to present rulings of the

church can a member take the position of deputy assessor or tax-collector? He cannot according to conference of April 1871.

**Petition to Conference.**—Asking that the present plan for nominating candidates for minister or deacon be so modified that the church might make its selections more in line with the scriptural qualifications required in a minister or deacon. After some consideration the matter was dismissed, until the next conference.

**Marriage Gifts.**—The subject was discussed from different bearings without definite action being taken.

**Call for Bishop.**—Bishop Hildebrand made application for the ordination of a bishop in Upper District. Granted.

Conference closed with silent prayer and the use of hymn 2 in supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank.—3,

**Ministers:**—Jacob R. Hildebrand, Christian Good, Christian Brunk, Daniel S. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, Erasmus Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Simeon Heatwole, Isaac Grove, Samuel Shank, Jos. F. Heatwole, John Geil, Joseph Hashbarger, Sem S. Weaver, Solomon Beery, Daniel Mellinger, George Brunk, Henry Wenger, Lewis Shank, Jacob Martin, Samuel Hess, of Pennsylvania.—22.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Samuel Weaver, Martin Brunk, David E. Rhodes, Daniel H. Good, Fred A. Rhodes, Jacob Showalter.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 32.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1891

Conference convened at the Bank Church (Middle District), October 2nd and 3rd, 1891. Opening exercises Friday morning at nine o'clock.

Moderators, Michael Shank and Christian Good. Secretary, Emanuel Suter.

Addresses by Bishops, Coffman, Shank, Hildebrand and Heatwole.

Ministers and deacons responded in turn to the call of Deacon Fred A. Rhodes.

### Friday Afternoon

**The Petition to Conference.**—Numerously signed by members of the church asking that the plan for choosing candidates for official positions in the church be brought more in line with the Confession of Faith and scriptural qualifications, was read and commented on during entire afternoon session, and on being renewed the following morning was, finally dismissed.

**For the Extension of the Gospel.**—Through Bishop Coffman the Conference was asked to formulate a plan for extending the gospel and the non-resistant faith beyond our present bounds. Decided that each bishop present the proposition to his district congregations with the view of arriving at a plan for carrying the gospel to other fields within reach of our ministers.

Conference closed with prayer and singing the 57th hymn.

Members present at this conference.

**Bishops:**—Jacob Hildebrand, Samuel Coffman, Abraham Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole.—4.

**Ministers:**—Christian Good, Christian Brunk, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Daniel S. Heatwole, John Geil, Emanuel Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, George Brunk,

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Landis, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Elias Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Fred A. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Abram Simmers, of Dunkard church.—19.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Landis, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Elias Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Fred A. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Abram Simmers, of Dunkard church.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 33.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1892

Conference assembled at Brannemans Church (Lower District), May 13th and 14th, 1892. Opened Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

**Michael Shank and Christian Good, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.**

Admonitions by Bishops Coffman, Shank and Heatwole.

Ministers and deacons responded at the call of Deacon Fred A. Rhodes, all of whom made favorable reports of their work.

#### Friday Afternoon

No special query in moderator's hands and bishops having no matter of their own to present, this conference at the beginning had to all appearance, nothing to do.

**Visiting Scattered Numbers.**—On motion of moderator this subject was discussed, and decided that greater vigilance be used by bishops, ministers and deacons along this line of church work.

**Head-Covering in Time of Prayer.**—Decided that it is unbecoming and out of gospel order for sisters to appear in public worship, or during any season of prayer without the head-covering mentioned by Paul in I Cor. 11:3—16.

**Election of Officers.**—Moderator for two years, Christian Good. Secretary for two years, Emanuel Suter. Arranging committee for two years, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Daniel S. Heatwole, Samuel Shank.

Conference closed with prayer and hymn No. 2 in supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers:**—Christian Brunk, Christian Good, Henry Wenger, Abram B. Burkholder, Sem S. Weaver, Daniel S. Heatwole, Samuel Shank, Gabriel D. Heatwole, John Geil, Solomon Beery, Jacob Martin, Daniel Mellinger, Joseph Hashbarger, Simeon Heatwole, Emanuel Heatwole, Peter S. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—17.

**Deacons:**—Peter Blosser, Samuel Weaver, Martin Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Jacob Landis, Jacob Geil, Christian Shank, Daniel H. Good, Fred A. Rhodes, David E. Rhodes, Elias Brunk, Isaac Eby, of Maryland.—12.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 32.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1892

Conference met at Springdale Church (Upper District), October 7th and 8th, 1892. Opened Friday morning at 9 o'clock.

**Christian Good, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.**

Admonitions by Bishops, Coffman, Shank and Heatwole.

Deacons and ministers responded to the call of Deacon Michael Shank.

## Friday Afternoon

**Instruction of Converts Openly Before the Church.**—On motion it was decided that such instructions should be held before members of the church.

**\*Evangelizing Mission Board.**—Would this conference recognize the General Mission Board of the church in America by confirming its appointment of a brother (Peter S. Hartman) in Virginia to represent it? After some discussion it was decided not to co-operate with said Board, but instead to create a Home Mission Fund, to be under the control of the Virginia Conference.

Conference adjourned with prayer and the use of hymn No. 8 in the supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers:**—Isaac Grove, Christian Brunk, Christian Good, Daniel S. Heatwole, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Simeon Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, George Brunk, Jos. F. Heatwole, John Geil, Jacob Martin, Lewis Shank, Erasmus Shank, Henry Wenger, Emanuel Heatwole, Joseph Hashbarger.—17.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Jacob Landis, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Reuben Rhodes, Daniel H. Good, Michael Shank, Christian Shank.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 28.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1893

The Virginia Conference met at Weavers Church (Middle District), Rockingham county, Va., May 12, 1893. Opened promptly at 9 o'clock by singing the first hymn in the Supplement.

Christian Good, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.

Admonitions by Bishops Abram Shank, Samuel Coffman, Anthony P. Heatwole and Lewis J. Heatwole.

The rules of Conference were read by the Secretary.

At this juncture the moderator read a letter written by bishop Jacob Hildebrand to this body, expressing a desire to be present, but age and infirmity forbade. His prayer was that God would bless the work of the Conference, that much good would result from it, in building up the church, etc.

All the ministers and deacons present, one after another in order, in short addresses, expressed their experiences since the last Conference.

## Friday Afternoon

**Question I**—Bishop Coffman asked the Conference whether or not it would recognize Bro. L. J. Heatwole as a Bishop in the Virginia Conference as he was ordained as such in the Missouri Conference, and expects to make his home with us in Virginia. It was duly considered, and decided by vote that this matter be referred to the church council.

**Question II**—To the Virginia Conference: Will this Conference take up, carefully read and consider the 20th article of our Confession of Faith and see what is in it. Considerable time was spent in discussing the above question, and finally passed the following resolution by vote.

\*This action however was not meant to prohibit or restrict members from contributing of their means to support the fund by the General Board for mission purposes.

*Resolved*, That we have carefully considered the above question and do find the present rule in the church in harmony with said article.

\***Question III**—This question was laid over for consideration to-morrow.

Conference now adjourned until tomorrow morning at 8:30 o'clock, by prayer and singing hymn No. 56.

Saturday morning, Conference opened promptly at the time appointed by singing hymn No. 191. Bishop L. J. Heatwole read the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the Ephesians followed with a few words of comment and prayer.

The Moderator said Conference was ready for business.

**Question IV**.—Presented by Bishop Shank was considered. All queries sent to our committee for consideration in conference should bear the name or names of persons sending them, and if desired to be withheld from Conference should be so mentioned.

The above question was decided in the affirmative.

**Question V**—Took place of question three from yesterday. This question was satisfactorily considered, in doing so it was found that in a former Conference a similar act had been passed. By reference to the minutes of a Conference that met at Hildebrands Church, Upper District, Augusta Co., September 28th and 29th, 1877, resolutions 1, 2, 3 and 4 have been hereby renewed by the majority of the voice of this Conference as a substitute.

**Question VI**.—Moreover, if thy Brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

Are all trespassers included in this passage of Scripture.

Decided, they are not.

Conference now adjourned to meet in the lower district at Zion Church, Rockingham county, Virginia, the first Friday in October, 1893. It closed with devotional exercises, prayer by Bishop Shank and singing hymn No. 2 in the Supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**:—Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—4.

**Ministers**:—Jacob R. Hildebrand, Isaac Grove, George Brunk, Jacob Martin, Solomon Beery, Samuel Shank, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Peter S. Heatwole, Christian Good, Daniel S. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, John Geil, Simeon Heatwole, Sem S. Weaver, Henry Wenger, Lewis Shank, Joseph Hashbarger, David Gzell, of Maryland, Philip H. Parret, of Pennsylvania.—20.

**Deacons**:—Michael Shank, Daniel H. Good, Jacob Showalter, Samuel Weaver, Martin Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Christian Shank, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Jacob Landis, Elias Brunk, Fred A. Rhodes.—12.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 36.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1893

The Virginia Conference met at Zion Church in the Lower District, Rockingham county, Virginia, October 6th, 1893. Conference opened promptly at 9 o'clock a. m., by singing hymn, No. 332, Bishop Coffman read part of the

\*On non-conformity to the world.

sixth chapter of Ephesians and followed with a few remarks from the same, then all joined in silent prayer.

Christian Good, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.

Four bishops were present, namely: Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole and Lewis J. Heatwole. The rules were read by the Moderator, followed by the customary addresses by the bishops.

All the ministers and deacons present followed in a few words of admonition and encouragment, expressing a desire for more earnest labor in the church.

#### Friday Afternoon

**Question I**—Bishop Coffman presented for consideration a request of H. L. Rhodes, of Fauquier county, Virginia, asking for visits from the ministering brethren and also to send a deacon to them.

*Resolved*, That the church now established in Fauquier county, Virginia, be visited monthly by ministers and deacons as the Bishops of the three districts may arrange.

**Question II**—Whereas, our observation teaches us that a large per cent of our members do not attend our regular inquiry meetings, would it not then be expedient to substitute in their stead an annual or semi-annual visit to each member that all might be heard from?

*Resolved*, That the usual inquiry meetings be held twice a year at the call of the Bishop, and that all members be visited by the deacons once a year.

**Question III**—Is it right for any of our members to haul apples to the still house. Decided that it is not right.

**Question IV**—Would it not be expedient to grant more privileges to our subordinate ministers in administering the ordinances of the church such as baptizing and the communion, thereby lessening the labors of the Bishops?

These privileges have been granted in conference held at Mount Pleasant church, September, 1874.

Afternoon services adjourned at 4 o'clock with prayer and hymn No. 129 and benediction by Bishop Coffman.

Services Saturday morning opened at 8:30 o'clock with hymn No. 32, Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the 12th chapter of Romans, and followed with prayer. The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question V**—A resolution was read from the committee appointed in Middle District to draft resolutions for Home Missions. After some discussion it was sent to the church to be ratified.

The next conference was decided to be held at Springdale church in Augusta county, the second Friday of May, 1894.

Conference adjourned at 12 o'clock with prayer and hymn No. 56.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Samuel Coffman, Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—4.

**Ministers**—Jacob R. Hildebrand, George Brunk, Solomon Beery, Samuel Shank, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jacob Martin, Jos. F. Heatwole, Christian Good, Abram B. Burkholder, John Geil, Christian Brunk, Henry Wenger, Lewis Shank, Joseph Hashbarger, Erasmus Shank, Jacob Bowers, Daniel Mellinger, Daniel S. Heatwole.—18.

**Deacons**—Daniel H. Good, Jacob Showalter, Samuel Weaver, Martin Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Christian Shank, David E. Rhodes, Fred A. Rhodes,

Jacob Geil, Jacob Landis, Elias Brunk, Peter Blosser.—12.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 34.

#### MINUTES OF SPECIAL CONFERENCE—FEBRUARY 1894

On the 25th day of February, 1894, a special conference of Ministers and Deacons met at Weavers Church (Middle District), to examine into the workings of the Sunday schools.

Lewis J. Heatwole was chosen Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

Resolutions of conference of September 1869 read and commented on brought out the following queries and answers:

**Lesson Helps.**—Shall we continue the use of the Lesson Helps?

Decided that those desiring to use them shall have the privilege of doing so. Those not wishing to use them need not.

**\*Organizations of Sunday Schools.**—How shall our Sunday Schools be organized?

Decided that two or more ministers shall be chosen by the bishop of the district for each church where Sunday school is desired. The duty of the ministers thus named shall draw a committee from members of the congregation who are Sunday school workers in the vicinity where the Sunday school is to be organized. Said committee in co-operation with the ministers shall choose Superintendents and Secretaries and Treasurers respectively for the school for which they have been appointed as committee.

Meeting adjourned with song and the benediction.

Those present:

**Bishops:**—Lewis J. Heatwole.—1.

**Ministers:**—Gabriel D. Heatwole, Solomon Beery, Abram B. Burkholder, Peter S. Heatwole, Simeon Heatwole, Emanuel Heatwole, Sem S. Weaver.—7.

**Deacons:**—Reuben S. Rhodes, David E. Rhodes, Elias Brunk, Jacob Shewalter.—4.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 12.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1894

The Virginia Conference met at Springdale Church (Upper District), Augusta county, Va., May 11, 1894, opening promptly at 9 o'clock a. m. by singing hymn number 180, and prayer.

Christian Good, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.

Three bishops were present, viz.: Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole and Lewis J. Heatwole. They addressed conference as usual.

Daniel S. Heatwole, a member of this body, having died, on account of which some members are not present, and some here want to attend his funeral tomorrow. It is desired that the business of this conference be transacted today. To save time some of the customary preliminaries were omitted and the moderator at once declared conference ready for business. It was now in order for the Bishops to present such matter as they may have for consideration.

**Question I**—Bishop L. J. Heatwole presented the question of paying doc-

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\*This system for organizing Sunday schools has been continued from year to year in Middle district till the present time, (1910).

tor bills in chronic cases, this question was duly considered.

Bishop Shank said in his district doctor bills never were paid, and ever since he has been a member of conference he never knew such was the rule. The following resolution was passed.

*Resolved*, That the conference never authorized the payment of doctor's bills for poor members.

**Question III**—What scriptures have we to prohibit brethren wearing a moustache.

The following passages will answer the above question: James 1:22; Leviticus 13:45; I Peter 1:14; James 4:4; I John 2:15-16; Luke 16:15; Rom. 12:16; II Thes. 2:15; Ezek. 24:17; II Thes. 3:6-14; I Peter 5:5.

Conference now adjourned for dinner by use of hymn number 389.

Afternoon service opened by singing hymn number 2 in supplement.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole read from I Peter 3; then engaged in silent prayer. Conference now declared open for business.

Bishop Shank asked the conference for the privilege of ordaining a minister in his district. The matter was considered, the vote taken and decision rendered in the affirmative.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked for an amendment to a resolution offered in the last conference by Bishop Coffman, to read to visit the church in Fauquier county, Va., once every eight weeks instead of every four weeks. The amendment was sustained.

**Question IV**—Could not the officers of the church and especially the deacons and deaconesses take more active steps toward suppressing all unnecessary noise and confusion in the inside as well as in the crowds outside of our churches at the time of our communion services? The following resolution was offered and passed.

*Resolved*, That it be the duty of our deacons and deaconesses to suppress all disorder at our communion services and public worship.

**Question V**—Was answered by reference to a resolution passed in conference in September, 1877, 4th resolution.

**Question VII**—Resolved, That the custom of wearing badges, crepe, gloves, and wearing hats at times of funerals on the part of our brethren when acting as pall-bearers is not consistent with our faith.

This Conference now elected a moderator, arranging committee and secretary. The following brethren were chosen: Christian Good, Moderator, Samuel Shank, Joseph F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Committee; Lewis Shank, Secretary.\*

*Resolved*, That next conference meet at the Bank Church, Middle District, Rockingham Co., Va., the first Friday in October, 1894. Conference now adjourned with prayer, singing hymn number 348.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishop**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**—Samuel Shank, Joseph Hashbarger, Sem S. Weaver, Jos. F. Heatwole, Isaac Grove, Jacob Martin, George Brunk, Emanuel Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Abram B. Burkholder, Solomon Beery, Christian Good, Peter S. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, John Geil.—15.

\*Being a member of the conference body, Lewis Shank was not eligible. It was afterwards learned that it had previously been decided that one outside the body should serve as secretary. Hence, Emanuel Suter continued for another conference.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, David E. Rhodes, Martin Brunk, Elias Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Jacob Landis, Daniel H. Good, Samuel Weaver.—8  
Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1894

The Virginia Conference met at the Bank Church (Middle District), Rockingham Co., Va., October 5th, 1894. Opened promptly at nine o'clock

Christian Good, Moderator. Emanuel Suter, Secretary.

\*Four bishops were present, viz: Joseph Bixler, of Mahoning county, O., Abraham Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole and L. J. Heatwole. As is customary in this conference the Bishops delivered their addresses.

Ministers and deacons reported favorably of their work, and a willingness still to perform the work assigned them faithfully, as God would give them grace.

Conference now adjourned for dinner, with prayer and singing hymn No. 41 in Supplement.

Afternoon services opened by singing hymn No. 51 and reading 3rd chapter of Colossians. The moderator said conference was ready for business.

**Question I**—Is it right or in harmony with the teachings of God's word for members to take part or go to picnics, church festivals, lawn parties and all such world like amusements? Decided it is not right. Therefore reference is made to an act passed in conference September the 25th, 1874.

**Question II**—When votes are cast for ministers or deacons, have the heads of the church a right to reject votes when in their judgment they have been improperly cast? Decided in the affirmative.

**Question III**—When members offend and the church asks an acknowledgment of them, has the minister the right to allow them to commune as long as they have not complied with the requirements of the church? Decided in the negative.

**Question IV**—Whereas, there is so much chewing tobacco and spitting on the floor in the house of God in time of service, is it not a duty for our members as well as the ministers, to speak and protest against such a filthy habit as well as all other bad habits? Decided in the affirmative.

**Question V**—Is it necessary to hold examining meetings after the members have been visited by the deacons? Decided that our council meetings be continued as before.

Saturday morning conference opened promptly at the time appointed, singing hymn No. 8. Bishop Shank read the 12th chapter of Romans, followed with a few remarks and prayer. The moderator said conference was ready for business.

**Question VI**—The following question was presented by Bishop A. P. Heatwole in reference to ordaining a minister or deacon in a particular church, and considered. As there are three or four different congregations in each of our districts, should not the heads of the church have the right to name the locality or congregation where a minister or deacon is most needed? It was decided in the affirmative.

**Question VII**—Whereas, our congregations have become very large would it not be proper for our deacons to maintain a better system in the church houses at the time of funerals both in seating the people as they come in and keep the aisles clear, while the corpse is being exposed? The vote was taken and passed.

\*Bish. Samuel Coffman died August 26th, before this conference.

Conference now proceeded to elect a secretary. The vote was taken and resulted in the choice of Samuel M. Burkholder.

Next Conference to meet at Brannemans Church, in the Lower District, Rockingham county, Va., on the second Friday in May, 1895. Conference adjourned with singing hymn No. 60 and prayer.

Members present:

**Bishops:**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Joseph Bixler, of Ohio.—4.

**Ministers:**—Christian Good, Christian Brunk, George Brunk, Samuel Shank, Daniel Mellinger, Simeon Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jacob Martin, Joseph Hashbarger, Abram B. Burkholder, Solomon Beery, Jos. F. Heatwole, John Geil, Emanuel Heatwole, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Lewis Shank, Sem S. Weaver, Peter S. Heatwole.—18.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Daniel H. Good, Reuben Rhodes, Elias Brunk, Jacob Landes, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Jacob Geil, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Showalter, Michael Shank.—11.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 33.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1895

The Virginia Conference met at the Branneman Church, Lower District, Rockingham county, Va., on Friday, May 10, 1895.

Opened promptly at nine o'clock by singing hymn No. 1 in supplement, followed by the reading of the fifth chapter of Thessalonians and prayer. The rules of Conference were then read by the Moderator.

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

\*On account of a funeral service only one bishop, A. P. Heatwole, was present, and only a small attendance of ministers and deacons at the opening of Conference.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole in the opening address spoke of the objects of the conference, and on the duties of its members, showing them that they were all of such that were set apart to feed the flock of God; which they should do not for filthy lucre's sake, but willingly, not as lords over God's heritage (the Church) but that they should be ensamples to the flock, humbling themselves under the mighty hand of God. Keeping on the highway of holiness; watching and praying that they enter not into temptation, and flying to the City of Refuge when assailed.

The ministers and deacons then spoke in turn, giving many rich and wholesome admonitions, expressing a desire to labor more faithfully in the Master's cause; after which conference adjourned for dinner with prayer and singing hymn No. 39 in Supplement.

Afternoon services opened at 1:30 p. m. by singing hymn No. 278.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole read Ephesians 4 which was followed by prayer. Three bishops were now present with a good attendance of ministers and deacons.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole then reported the condition of the church in his district, stating that the general outlook was hopeful.

Bishop Shank did not think it proper for him to take up any time in speaking.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

\*Elizabeth Showalter, wife of Bro. John D. Showalter. Funeral at Weavers church at 10 a. m. same day that conference opened.

**Question I**—Would it not be better to form an organization in the church to assist each other in case of loss by fire than insure in other companies? Decided in the negative.

**Question II**—Is it in accordance with the teaching of Christ for members to engage in medal contests? Decided, it is not.

**Question III**—Does not this conference advise when questions are sent in for consideration to support said question by a passage of scripture. For example: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear." Answer. It does advise.

**Question IV**—Is it right for a minister to invite his neighbors and friends to his or his neighbor's house to read and teach the word of God according to the truth? Decided it is right.

**Question V**—If the above is right for a minister is it also right for a lay brother if he is the head of a family? Decided it is not right in the light of consistency.

Conference now adjourned to meet tomorrow morning with prayer and singing hymn No. 58.

Saturday morning Conference opened at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymn No. 187.

Bishop Shank read the twelfth chapter of Romans, followed by prayer.

The Moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question VI**—How shall a member be dealt with who has transgressed in one district and moved to another before his case is disposed of? Decided they shall be required to give satisfaction in the district they came from.

**Question VII**—As it is apparent to all that there is a great need of a greater effort to win souls for Christ would not this Conference deem it necessary to hold a series of meetings occasionally where there are no resident ministers or where the church is weak or on the decline? Decided in the affirmative.

Next Conference will meet on the first Friday of October, 1895, in Augusta Co., Va., place of meeting to be decided hereafter. Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 2 in supplement.

Members present at this conference.

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**—Christian Brunk, Abram B. Burkholder, Jacob Martin, Joseph Hashbarger, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Sem S. Weaver, Samuel Shank, Peter S. Heatwole, Simeon Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, George Brunk, Erasmus Shank, Isaac Grove, Christian Good, John Geil, Henry Wenger, John K. Brubaker and Abram Witmer, of Pennsylvania.—19.

**Deacons**—Fred A. Rhodes, Michael Shank, Elias Brunk, David E. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Daniel H. Good, Reuben Rhodes, Christian Shank, Jacob Showalter.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 31.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 1895

The Virginia Conference met at Springdale Church, Augusta Co., Va., on Friday, October 4th, 1895. Opened promptly at nine o'clock a. m., by singing hymn No. 197, Hymns & Tunes. Bishop L. J. Heatwole then read the 12th chapter of 1st Corinthians which was followed by prayer. In the absence of the moderator, Michael Shank was elected moderator pro tem.

Michael Shank, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

Afternoon session opened at 1 o'clock p. m. by singing hymn No. 12. Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the 1st chapter of Phillipians, which was followed by prayer.

The moderator now declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—Bishop L. J. Heatwole asked the privilege of ordaining one or two ministers in the Middle District. The privilege was granted.

**Question II**—Deacon F. A. Rhodes asked the privilege of ordaining two deacons in the Middle District. The privilege was granted.

**Question III**—What is the feeling of this conference with regard to holding service at the house of mourning before going to church or burying ground? It has been customary and should be done when requested.

**Question IV**—Would it not be proper for the treasurer of the church to make an itemized statement of the financial condition of the church at the time of the inquiry meeting? Decided in the affirmative.

**Question V**—Would it not be advisable for the bishops to be present with the committee when arranging business for conference? Decided advisable.

**Question VI**—An amendment to the answer of question No. 5 of the last conference, was then considered, and was decided to substitute the answer: It is not advisable for a lay member to call a meeting. Conference now adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 255.

Saturday morning conference opened at 8:30 o'clock with singing hymn No. 217. Bishop L. J. Heatwole then read the second chapter of Thessalonians, which was followed with prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question VII**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked the privilege of ordaining a deacon in the Union Chapel and Mt. Pleasant congregations. The privilege was granted.

**Question VIII**—Shall the whole Augusta district have a voice in the selection of a deacon at the above named place? Answered in the affirmative.

**Question IX**—Does this conference advise that conference minutes be printed and distributed among the members of the church? Decided advisable.

**Question X**—Is it consistent for a brother to hold the office of overseer of poor? Decided not advisable.

Next conference will be held on the first Friday and Saturday of May, 1896, at the Weaver Church, Middle District. Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 215.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—2.

**Ministers**—Simeon Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Samuel Shank, Solomon Beery, Jos. F. Heatwole, Jacob Martin, Abram B. Burkholder, Sem S. Weaver, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Isaac Grove, Erasmus Shank.—11.

**\*Deacons**—Michael Shank, Fred A. Rhodes, Samuel Weaver, Elias Brunk, Martin Brunk, Jacob Landis, Reuben Rhodes, David E. Rhodes, Perry Brunk, of Ohio.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons, 22.

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\*Deacon Daniel H. Good died July 16th before meeting of this conference.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 1896

The Virginia Conference met at the Weaver Church, Rockingham Co., Va., on Friday, May 8th, 1896, opened promptly at 9 o'clock a. m.

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel Burkholder, Secretary.

Afternoon session opened at one o'clock by singing hymn No. 279. Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the fourth chapter of second Corinthians, which was followed with prayer.

**Question I**—Should not all the members of conference have the privilege of presenting their own questions at the time of conference?

The privilege was granted.

**Question II**—Is it right for a brother or sister to indorse a note and then refuse to pay unless it is first taken through a regular course of law?

Decided, not right.—Proverbs, sixth chapter, verses one and two and 11th chapter and 15th verse.

**Question III**—Bishop A. Shank asked in behalf of C. Brunk, the privilege of ordaining a minister in Winchester District.

The privilege was granted.

**Question IV**—Bishop L. J. Heatwole asked advise of conference how to deal with an applicant he has for membership who has been expelled from another church, and declares his innocence of the charge against him but cannot be reconciled to the church of which he was a member?

Decided, to refer this matter to the decision of the Middle District.

Conference then adjourned by reading II Timothy, followed by prayer and singing hymn No. 33 in supplement.

Conference opened Saturday morning by singing hymn No. 1 in supplement.

**Question V**—Whereas many Railroad Companies have granted and offer to grant permits to ministers of the Gospel, by which they can travel over their respective roads at reduced rates when on ministerial duties, therefore be it resolved,

**First**, That we, as a body of ministers and deacons in Conference assembled this ninth day of May, 1896, hereby express our hearty appreciation of the kindness and good will of said Railroad Companies toward us, the church, and the Master's cause wherein we labor.

**Second**, Should any Minister of this body travel on said permits for purposes other than Ministerial, he shall fall under censure of this body and the church, and the Master's cause wherein we labor.

**Third**, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to each Company that may be applied to for permits by ministers of this Conference.

**Question VI**—Does this Conference oppose a General Conference?

Decided, in the affirmative.

**Election of Officers**.—The voting by ballot resulted in electing Christian Good, Moderator, Samuel Burkholder, Secretary and Samuel Shank, Jos. F. Heatwole and Erasmus Shank, Arranging Committee.

Conference adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 2 in the supplement.

Members present at this conference.

**Bishops**:—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**:—John Geil, Sem S. Weaver, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Jacob Martin,

Lewis Shank, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Simeon Heatwole, Samuel Shank, Peter S. Heatwole, Christian Good, Joseph Hashbarger, Solomon Beery, Joseph Geil, Daniel Mellinger, \*Isaac B. Wenger, J. Snively Martin, Erasmus Shank.—17.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Michael Shank, Jacob Geil, Samuel Weaver, Christian Shank, Elias Brunk, Martin Brunk, Jacob Showalter, Reuben Rhodes, David E. Rhodes.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 30.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1896

Conference convened at Zion Church (Lower District), October 2nd and 3rd, 1896. Opened Friday morning at nine o'clock.

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

Bishop's admonitions by Abram Shank, Anthony Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, John M. Shenk, of Ohio.

Ministers and deacons followed with interesting and instructive addresses.

#### Friday Afternoon

**The Church in West Virginia.**—Suggestions and plans for more systematic organization for carrying on gospel work in West Virginia was warmly discussed, but no definite action taken.

**The Spiritual Condition of the Church.**—How can we raise the standard of piety, or improve the spiritual condition of the church?

**Answer,** By all members of the church working for more piety and spiritual life, and a deeper form of grace in the heart. Rom. 12:10; I Thess. 4:9; I Tim. 5:1—8 and I Peter 1:22.

**Building and Loan Associations.**—Is it right for a brother or sister to go into building and loan associations to borrow or lend money knowing that usurer's interest is taken both ways?

This question was feelingly and earnestly discussed and many spiritual passages read, but no decision was reached.

Conference adjourned with prayer and singing the second hymn in the supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, John M. Shenk, of Ohio.—4.

**Ministers:**—Samuel Shank, Christian Brunk, John Geil, Joseph Geil, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Simeon Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Emanuel Heatwole, Solomon Beery, Christian Good, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Abram B. Burkholder, Erasmus Shank, Joseph Hashbarger, Daniel Mellinger, Lewis Shank.—17.

**Deacons:**—Fred A. Rhodes, Jacob Geil, Christian Shank, Elias Brunk, Reuben Rhodes, Michael Shank, Jacob Showalter.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 28.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY, 1897

The Virginia Conference met at the Spring Dale, Church, Augusta County,

\*Isaac B. Wenger died on July 7th following this conference. This was the first and only conference he attended—having been in the ministry only a little over two months and a half.

Va., on Friday, May 14th, 1897, opened promptly at nine o'clock a. m. by singing hymn No. 45, in "Hymns & Tunes."

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

The ministers and deacons then spoke in turn as usual giving many rich admonitions, after which conference adjourned for dinner, with prayer and singing hymn No. 38.

Afternoon session opened at one o'clock, by singing hymn No. 293. The second chapter of Ephesians was then read by Bishop A. P. Heatwole which was followed by prayer. The moderator then declared conference ready for business:

**Question I**—"Is it consistent for our ministers to preach and use their influence against decisions and actions of conference when said decisions and actions have been accepted and ratified by the Church?"

Decided not consistent.

Other matters were then considered but no decisions rendered, after which conference adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 226.

Saturday morning conference opened at nine o'clock, by singing hymn No. 246. The fourth chapter of Ephesians was then read by Bishop L. J. Heatwole and followed by prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question II**—Is it for the prosperity and the upbuilding of the Church, for our members to assist in revival meetings of other denominations.

Decided it is not.

**Question III**—Is it expedient for our members to leave the audience room to wash feet at the time of communion meeting?

Decided not expedient.

Decided to hold next conference in the Middle District on the first Friday and Saturday of October 1897, place to be decided on hereafter. Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 197.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**—Isaac Grove, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Christian Brunk, Samuel Shank, Sem S. Weaver, Jacob Martin, Solomon Beery, Erasmus Shank, Simeon Heatwole, Emanuel Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Joseph Hashbarger, Lewis Shank, Jos. F. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, J. Snively Martin, Jacob Bowers, Henry H. Good, of Tennessee.—18.

**Deacons**—Fred A. Rhodes, Michael Shank, Elias Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Martin Brunk, Isaac Grove, Jr., Jacob Landis, Jacob Showalter, Reuben Rhodes.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 30.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1897

The Virginia Conference met at the Bank Church (Middle District), on Friday, October 1st, 1897.

Opened promptly at nine o'clock, a. m., by singing hymn No. one in supplement.

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

The afternoon session opened at 1:20 o'clock, p. m., by singing hymn No. 229 with prayer. The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—Should our members be allowed to visit saloons and other places where spirituous liquors are sold and drank, to engage in drinking?"

—I Thessalonians, V. 22.—"Abstain from all appearance of evil."

Decided, "It shall not be allowed."

**Question II**—If a member commits an offense against the acts of conference, is it necessary to ask the Church what they require of him. Should not the Bishop dispose of his case without consulting the Church?

Decided all such cases should be submitted to the church counsel except those already provided for.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 33 in supplement.

Saturday morning Conference opened with singing hymn No. 175. Bishop A. P. Heatwole, read the fourth chapter of first Corinthians, which was followed by prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question III**—If a member transgresses and is willing to make an open acknowledgment before the church, should the church counsel be taken?

Decided not necessary.

**Question IV**—How can inactive and careless members be brought to more activity in the spiritual life and a living faith in Christ?

Referred to a former decision, which reads, "Resolved that the Bishops, ministers and deacons have a special care over them and visit them with brotherly kindness."

**Question V**—Would it not be for the prosperity of the church to have special meetings for the purpose of instructing our members and get them to see the importance of living more devoted to the rules and regulations of Conference?

Decided in the affirmative. Col. 3, 16.

\*A plan was then called for by which a reconciliation might be brought about in the Middle District. The following resolutions were adopted:

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\*The matter here referred to is known as "The Middle District Trouble." This primarily had its origin with certain members of the Middle district congregations who as early as the year 1891 became dissatisfied by reason of the introduction of new features of Church work—notably Sunday Schools, Series of Meetings, Mission work of the Church, etc. An open declaration of their dissatisfaction did not develop until December 10th, 1895, when an ordination sermon for choosing candidates for the ministry was preached at the Bank Church by Lewis J. Heatwole, in which the scriptural qualifications for a minister, along with the things that may disqualify, were so sharply drawn as to cause great offense to many members of the Church, and more especially to those who had hitherto been dissatisfied.

As the trouble, in the next two years continued to grow and spread rather than to subside, the Virginia Conference, in its session at the Bank Church October 2, 1897, provided for the selection of a committee whose duty it should be to investigate the trouble and if possible, to restore love and harmony in the Church. Both sides were to be given a hearing and the decision of the committee was to be final. The committee was composed of Bishop Isaac Eby and Deacon Jacob M. Greider of Pennsylvania and C. B. Brennenman of Ohio.

After being in session for four days at Weavers Church December 14th to 17th, 1897, this committee in its findings decided that Lewis J. Heatwole was in error, who at once made his confession before the Church.

Nearly all the prominent leaders with the dissatisfied element were also found in error, and with a few exceptions, all made confession; but it later developed that they could not be reconciled to the decision of the committee, and in time took their former stand against the rulings of the Church and its councils.

At a general membership meeting held at the Bank church September 4th, 1900, all members of the Middle district were called into council. In this meeting about 24 ministers

**First**, That a committee be appointed to investigate the matter and render a decision.

**Second**, That the committee be selected from abroad.

**Third**, That A. Shank and A. P. Heatwole shall select the committee.

**Fourth**, That the committee shall consist of three members.

*Resolved*, That the next conference be held at the Branneman Church, Lower District, on the second Friday and Saturday of May, 1898.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 332.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**—Christian Good, Christian Brunk, John Geil, Samuel Shank, Joseph Geil, Abram B. Burkholder, Jos. F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Daniel Mellinger, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Simeon Heatwole, Emanuel Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, Jacob Martin, Peter S. Heatwole, George Brunk, Joseph Hashbarger, Solomon Beery, David Garber, of Ohio.—21.

**Deacons**—Michael Shank, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Isaac Grove, Jr., Fred A. Rhodes, Jacob Landis, Peter Blosser, David E. Rhodes, Reuben Rhodes, Henry Powell, of Tennessee.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 34.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY, 1898

The Virginia Conference met at the Branneman Church, Lower District, on Friday, May 13th, 1898.

Opened at 9:15 o'clock, a. m., by singing hymn No. 1 in supplement.

Christian Good, moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

The ministers and deacons then as usual spoke in turn, giving many wholesome admonitions and expressed a desire and a willingness to labor on in the good work, after which conference adjourned for dinner, with prayer and singing hymn No. 180.

The afternoon session opened at one o'clock, p. m., by singing hymn No. 229, followed with prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—Whereas the hymn and tune book is not giving general satisfaction, would not this conference advise the compiling of another one, suitable for church purposes, and also to be used in Sunday School?

Decided advisable.

**Question II**—Is it proper to use the term foot washing when the Scriptures call it feet washing?

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and deacons of the Virginia Conference were present. Of the 251 members of the Church who here presented themselves in council, all identified themselves with the Church but ten.

All members of Middle district who failed to appear in this council, were afterward visited by officials of the Church and admonished and solicited to identify themselves with the church and abide by the decision of the committee. The sum total showed that 433 members stood by the committee as well as the Church and its councils, and 69 who refused, and 31 who requested more time.

After waiting 7 months longer for the dissatisfied ones to decide finally for themselves, the matter was closed up, on the 31st day of March 1901, at the time of public worship at the Bank Church, when the names of 69 persons were published as such who were no longer to be considered as members of the Church.

"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet."—John 13:14.

Decided not proper.

Conference then adjourned (to meet Saturday morning), with prayer and singing.

Saturday morning conference opened with singing, reading from the Scriptures and prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question III**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked conference to consider the necessity of sending ministers to remain with the small congregations of members without a minister.

*Resolved*, That this conference put forth an effort to fill the above named places with suitable ministers well established in the faith.

**Question IV**—Christian Brunk asked permission to ordain a deacon in the Winchester District. Granted.

The following officers were then elected:

Moderator, C. Good. Secretary, S. M. Burkholder.

Arranging Committee, Samuel Shank, J. F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank.

*Resolved*, To hold the next conference at the Spring Dale, Church, Augusta county, Va., on the first Friday of October, 1898.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 272.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**—Samuel Shank, Lewis Shank, Erasmus Shank, Christian Brunk, Joseph Geil, John Geil, Christian Good, Jos. F. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, Sem S. Weaver, J. Snively Martin, Emanuel Heatwole, Jacob Martin, Simeon Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Daniel Mellinger, Joseph Hashbarger.—17.

**Deacons**—Michael Shank, Christian Shank, Jacob Geil, Elias Brunk, Martin Brunk, Samuel Weaver, Jacob Showalter, Fred A. Rhodes, Isaac Grove.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 29.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1898

The Virginia Conference met at the Springdale Church, Upper District, on Friday, October 7th, 1898.

Conference opened at nine o'clock a. m., by singing hymn No. 45. The fourth chapter of Eph., was read by Bishop A. Shank, and silent prayer was offered.

The moderator then read the rules of conference.

The secretary not being present, A. D. Wenger, of Millersville, Pennsylvania, was elected to serve in that capacity.

Christian Good, Moderator. Amos D. Wenger, Secretary.

The afternoon session opened at one o'clock p. m., by singing hymn No. 224, and by prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—What steps should this conference take to plant congregations of our faith in new fields?

*Resolved*, That this conference put forth an effort to secure men who

will go and teach the doctrines of Christ in new places and remain as long as expedient in these places.

**Question II**—How may our members and others be made to understand our peculiar doctrine as found in the word of God?

*Resolved*, That we direct them to search the Scriptures, and place before them such literature as the Mennonite Confession of Faith, Manual of Bible Doctrines and also that our ministers preach these doctrines more.

**Question III**—Would not this conference think it to be the upbuilding of the church to have well conducted Young People's Meetings to engage in singing sacred music and reading of the Scriptures and considering the same?

*Resolved*, That Young People's Meetings be allowed where the majority of the members desire it, to sing sacred songs and to study the Scriptures under the oversight of the ministers and the older brethren as long as they are conducted in an orderly way. The afternoon session adjourned at four o'clock with prayer and singing of hymn No. 452.

The Saturday morning session opened at nine o'clock with singing of hymn No. 163, followed by Bishop L. J. Heatwole reading II Corinthians, 4:1—18 and prayer. The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question IV**—Should this conference require the secretary to record the names of all parties bringing in questions and the names of the party making a motion, that their names may appear on the minutes of conference?

*Answer*, Yes.

Considerable time was taken for the discussion of how we should care for the poor, also the manner of conducting funerals, the propriety of the woman's prayer head covering were discussed at a considerable length.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole announced that the next conference would meet in the Middle District at the Weaver Church on the second Friday of May, 1899.

Conference adjourned at 11:20 a. m., with remarks by Bishop A. Shank, prayer and hymn No. 444.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**—Abram B. Burkholder, Joseph Geil, Isaac Grove, Sr., Christian Good, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, J. Snively Martin, Jacob Martin, Samuel Shank, Lewis Shank, Erasmus Shank, Sem S. Weaver, Amos D. Wenger, of Pennsylvania.—13.

**Deacons**—Elias Brunk, Martin Brunk, Isaac Grove, Jr., Samuel Weaver, John Landis, of Pennsylvania.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 21.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY, 1899

The Virginia Conference met at Weavers Church, Middle District, on Friday, May 12th, 1899. Opened at nine o'clock, a. m., by singing hymn No. 1 in Supplement. Bishop A. Shank read the twelfth chapter of Romans, which was followed by secret prayer.

The moderator then read the rules of conference.

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

The ministers and deacons then spoke in turn as usual, after which conference adjourned for dinner, with prayer and singing hymn No. 391.

**Afternoon Session.**—Conference opened at 1:10 o'clock by singing hymn No. 2 in supplement, which was followed with prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—Has a member a right to vote for a brother in another district for minister or deacon? Decided in the negative.

**Question II**—Shall votes be received that are given by proxy in church work, verbal or written? Decided they shall not.

**Question III**—Does this conference think it consistent to withhold the right from the bishops of the church to unite a brother or sister in marriage to one of another church or a non-professor, and at the same time consider such members in harmony with the church after being united in marriage, the ceremony having been performed by some one else having such power? Answer. We consider it consistent.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 33 in supplement.

**Saturday Morning.**—Conference opened at 8:30 o'clock with singing hymn No. 186.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole read a portion of Scripture which was followed with prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question IV**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked permission of conference to ordain a minister in his district. Granted.

**Question V**—Whereas certain bequests have been made to the Mennonite Church, but as no one was specified to receive such bequests, the benefits were lost to the church, therefore we as ministers and deacons of this conference feel the necessity of instructing our members that in case they wish to make such bequests to name some individual to receive such bequests and hold them in trust for the benefit of the church.

**Question VI**—It was decided to retain S. M. Burkholder as Secretary of conference till his term expires, notwithstanding his being a member of conference.

Next conference will be held at the Zion Church, Lower District, on the first Friday in October, 1899.

Conference adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 235.

Members present at this conference:

**\*Bishops:**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers:**—John Geil, Christian Brunk, Lewis Shank, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Jos. F. Heatwole, Abram B. Burkholder, Sem S. Weaver, Jacob Martin, J. Snively Martin, Joseph Hashbarger, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Samuel Shank, Christian Good, Philip H. Parret, George Ernst, of Pennsylvania.—15.

**Deacons:**—Michael Shank, Martin Brunk, Christian Eversole, Henry Blosser, Samuel Weaver, Jacob Showalter, Samuel M. Burkholder.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 25.

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\*Bishop Jacob Hildebrand died February 15th before this conference.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1899

The Virginia Conference met at the Zion Church, Lower District, on Friday, October 6th, 1899.

Opened at nine o'clock, a. m., by singing hymn No. 1 in supplement, fol-

lowed by the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole and prayer.

Christian Good, Moderator; Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

The moderator then read the rules of conference.

The ministers and deacons then spoke in turn, admonishing, instructing and encouraging each other to be faithful to their calling.

Conference then adjourned for dinner with prayer and singing hymn No. 265.

Afternoon session opened at 1:30 o'clock by singing hymn No. 329 and prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—L. J. Heatwole asked conference if they would ratify the appointment of the committee composed of Joseph Shank, C. H. Brunk and Samuel Weaver to compile the new Hymn and Tune Book spoken of at a former conference. Decided in the affirmative.

**Question II**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked permission to ordain a deacon in Fauquier or Prince William counties. Granted.

**Question III**—What does this conference recommend as the best way to suppress the excessive laughing, loud talking and other boisterous conduct indulged in by persons on the outside of some of our churches during the time of sacramental meetings.

*Resolved*, That this matter be referred to the supervision of the deacons.

**Question IV**—Is it considered consistent for our ministers to publish appointments for preaching for Mormon preachers? Considered inconsistent.

**Question V**—Considerable was then said with regard to the inconsistency of so much talking and laughing in the church after the congregation is dismissed. It was decided that the Bishop should instruct their congregations to abstain from it.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 115.

Saturday morning conference opened at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymn No. 16, followed by the reading of the 12th chapter of Romans by Bishop A. Shank and prayer.

**Question VI**—Bishop L. J. Heatwole introduced the 14th verse of the 6th chapter of II Corinthians, which was much commented upon, and a resolution was passed that the Bishops of each district see that a sermon be preached from time to time on the subject of the unequal yoke with reference to the marriage relation, as well as the worldly business relations.

Next conference will be held at the Spring Dale Church, Upper District, on the second Friday of May, 1900.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 389.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**\*Ministers**—Christian Brunk, John Geil, Jos. F. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, Martin Brunk, Joseph Geil, Sem S. Weaver, Christian Good, Samuel Shank, Abram B. Burkholder, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Jacob Martin, Joseph Hashbarger, J. Snively Martin, Erasmus Shank, Daniel F. Driver, of Missouri and Noah O. Blosser, of Ohio.—18.

**Deacons**—Henry Blosser, Michael Shank, Jacob Geil, Jacob Showalter, Samuel Weaver, Elias Brunk, Christian Shank, Samuel M. Burkholder.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 29.

\*Preacher Isaac Grove, Sr., died May 25th before this conference.

**CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY, 1900**

The Virginia Conference met at the Spring Dale Church, Upper District, on Friday, May 11th, 1900.

Opened at nine o'clock, a. m., by singing hymn No. 45 in *Hymns & Tunes*, followed by the reading of Rom. 12, and prayer.

The moderator then read the rules of conference.

Christian Good, Moderator. Samuel M. Burkholder, Secretary.

Afternoon session opened at one o'clock by singing hymn No. 255 and prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question I**—By the request of Bishop J. M. Shenk, of Ohio, Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked conference if they would associate with them the congregation in Warwick County, Va.

*Resolved*, That we accept them providing they are one with us in doctrine and faith and willing to work in subjection to this conference.

**Question II**—If contracting brethren and sisters desire to have the marriage ceremony performed in a church should their requests be granted. Not considered advisable.

**Question III**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked permission of conference to ordain a deacon in the upper part of his district. The permission was granted.

**Question IV**—To what class of communicants has the apostle reference and what is the nature of the inconsistency alluded to in I Corinthians 11:27 where the apostle speaks of partaking of the bread and the cup of the Lord unworthily? Compare also II Corinthians 13:5 and Numbers 9:10—13. Some of the inconsistencies committed are:

By Carelessness.

By expressing a union with God where there is none.

By expressing a union with those that obey not the Gospel.

By not communing at all.

**Question V**—Whereas it has been a custom at funerals to extend a general invitation for all to return to the house of the deceased to take dinner, would not this conference think it for good not to give such invitation? At the conference at the Spring Dale Church, May 11, 1888 a question similar to this was considered and it was decided not to be consistent with the occasion.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 31.

Conference opened Saturday morning at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymn No. 165.

Bishop G. R. Brunk then read the 4th chapter of Ephesians which was followed by prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question VI**—In case one of our brethren in order and good standing in the church, should feel called to preach the Gospel would this conference grant the privilege on probation, then after a few years of such service by the consent and approval of the congregation and conference be ordained to the ministry? Not granted.

**Question VII**—Would not this conference provide a way to assist in the support of our foreign missionaries? *Resolved*, That the deacons of each district appoint a committee of one or more to solicit funds for the above named purpose.

**Question VIII**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked by the request of H. L. Rhodes, permission to ordain a minister in Fauquier County, Va. Granted.

**Question IX**—As the Secretary of Conference has heretofore been selected from the laity, would not this conference grant the privilege of selecting also from the members of conference if desired. Not granted.

The following officers were elected:

Moderator, C. Good. Secretary, C. H. Brunk.

Arranging committee, Samuel Shank, J. F. Heatwole and Erasmus Shank.

Next conference will be held at the Bank Church, Middle District, the first Friday of October, 1900.

After reading of minutes conference adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 435.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, George R. Brunk, of Kansas.—4.

**Ministers**—Christian Brunk, Abram B. Burkholder, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Sem S. Weaver, J. Snively Martin, Jacob Martin, Joseph Geil, Joseph Hashbarger, Christian Good, Jos. F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Samuel Shank, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Amos D. Wenger, Lewis Lehman, ——— Hagy, of Pennsylvania.—16.

**Deacons**—Samuel Weaver, Isaac Grove, Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Henry L. Rhodes, Samuel M. Burkholder, John C. Driver, of Missouri.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 27.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1900

The semi-annual Conference of Virginia met at the Bank Church, (Middle District), on Friday, October 6, 1900, and was opened at nine o'clock a. m., by use of hymn No. 1 in supplement, announced by the moderator. After the singing, Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the fourth chapter of Ephesians and following this conference engaged in silent prayer.

Christian Good, being moderator, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole gave an invitation of welcome to members present of other conferences, to take part with us in this conference.

The other ministers and the deacons now spake in turn as called upon by Deacon Jacob Showalter.

Preparatory to adjournment for noon recess hymn No. 249 was sung and silent prayer engaged in. The moderator announced a recess of one and one-fourth hours.

Upon reassembling at 1:15 o'clock hymns 135 and 246 were used, after which Bishop Kauffman read the third chapter I Corinthians, and conference again engaged in silent prayer. The moderator now declared conference ready for business.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that printed applications for ministerial permits have been exhausted, and asked the pleasure of conference about having a new supply printed. Decided by vote to have a new supply printed.

**Query I**—What is the attitude of this conference toward worldly fashions and popularity.

*Resolved*, That as a conference we deem it expedient to hold to and recommend to our churches Christ and the apostle's teaching on this line, and

recommend that our ministers and especially the Bishops study and show up the inconsistency of these things in their true light and insist that each brother and sister live out these principles in their lives wherever they are according to Matt. 23:5; Luke 16:15; II Tim. 2:9, 10; Rom. 12:2; I Peter 2:9, 10; 1:14; 3:3, 4; Jas. 1:21, 27; 4:4; I John 2:15.

After some announcements, prayer and the singing of hymn 20 conference adjourned to meet tomorrow morning at half past eight o'clock.

### Saturday

Conference opened Saturday morning at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymn 279, after which Bishop D. Kauffman read and explained II Tim. 4, and asked conference to engage in prayer. The moderator said conference is ready for business.

**Query II**—Have we a right to choose our Gospel soil in reference to person as to talent, reputation, influence “Preach the Gospel to every creature.” On motion the question was tabled.

**Query III**—What is the sense of this conference in regard to Paul’s teaching I Cor. 14:34, 35 and I Tim. 2:12. Does he mean to forbid woman to teach in the churches altogether?

*Answer.* A study of the scriptures convinces us that God intended that woman should, in Christian work occupy the position in which she was created—as the help meet for man. In the light of such scriptures as Acts. 2:17; 21:9; Rom. 16:1-3; I Cor. 14:31-40 and Phil. 4:3, it is evident that Paul intended the admonitions referred to as a rebuke to disorderly conduct and woman usurping authority, rather than as a restriction against using her talent in Christian work. There is no instance recorded in the New Testament in which Christ or the apostles or the Church appointed or ordained a woman to serve as a public minister of the Gospel, and we believe that it is clearly without her sphere of labor, and contrary to the spirit of the Gospel for her to serve in such a position today: yet in general Christian work, we see no scriptural reason why she should not, when in Scriptural order (I Cor. 11:2-16) use her talent.

**Query IV**—What is the correct rendering of the prayer head covering and how may it be more firmly established?—After a vivid explanation of the apostle’s meaning as to the prayer head covering, by Bishop George R. Brunk the question was tabled for want of more time.

Bishop Shank states that the next conference will meet at the Brenneman Church on the second Friday in May with the privilege of holding the same at Lindale, to be at the pleasure of the Lower District. The minutes of conference being read and adopted conference adjourned at 11:30 o'clock a. m., after silent prayer and singing hymn No. 2 in supplement.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, George R. Brunk, of Kansas, Daniel Kauffman, of Missouri.—5.

**Ministers**—Christian Brunk, Christian Good, Daniel Mellinger, Jos. F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Martin Brunk, Abram B. Burkholder, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Edward J. Berkey, Gabriel D. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, Jacob Martin, Samuel Shank, Joseph Geil, Jacob R. Hildebrand.—16.

**Deacons**—Isaac Grove, Elias Brunk, Jacob Geil, Michael Shank, Samuel Weaver, Timothy Wenger, Samuel M. Burkholder, Jacob Showalter.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 29.

\*Preacher John Geil died on July 28th previous to this conference.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY, 1901

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Lindale Church (Lower District), on Friday, May 10th, 1901, and was opened at nine o'clock a. m., by the use of hymn No. 1 in supplement, the reading of the first chapter of Corinthians by L. J. Heatwole and prayer.

C. Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

Conference again opened with prayer and use of hymn No. 125. The moderator declared conference ready for business.

A. P. Heatwole stated that there was a slight misunderstanding with regard to the Warwick Church; that they have not yet put in a formal application to unite with this conference.

**Question I**—Bishop Abraham Shank asked permission to ordain two ministers in his district. Permission granted.

**Question II**—Should the church be counseled in any way before receiving members into the church by baptism or otherwise, after application is made and their names published, aside of the liberty always given individual members to object on scriptural grounds?

*Answer*, Not necessary.

**Question III**—When a member of the Church belonging to one district becomes a transgressor while temporarily residing in another district, whose duty shall it be to investigate the matter?

*Answer*, The duty of those in whose district the offence was committed.

## Friday Afternoon

**Question IV**—Question (1) enacted at Weavers Church, May 8, 1896, reads: "Should not all members of conference have the privilege of presenting their own questions at the time of conference." Resolved, That this be amended to read: "Should not every member of conference have the privilege of presenting their own questions in conference that spring up in their minds in time of conference, as the original question was intended." On motion, the change was adopted.

**Question V**—Was tabled.

**Question VI**—Why do we oppose life insurance.

For answer see the following scriptures: Luke 12:24; Matt. 6:25; Luke 12:26-31; Matt. 6:19-21; II Cor. 6:14-18; Prov. 29:25; I Cor. 6:20.

**Remarks**.—We should make Christ our life insurance for ourselves, our families and our church. "Our life is hid with Christ in God."

**Question VII**—Would it not be right for an official moving from one district, locality or State, to another, to counsel the voice of the body among whom they propose to dwell to see if his official labors will be agreeable. Decided that it would be right.

After singing hymns Nos. 143 and 58 and prayer, on motion, conference adjourned to meet tomorrow morning at 8:30 o'clock.

Conference opened this Saturday morning at 8:30 o'clock by use of hymn No. 251, the reading of the fourth chapter of I Corinthians and prayer.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole made some remarks as to the outlook of the ministerial or church work in West Virginia.

**Question VIII**—Inasmuch as it has become very prevalent to have pictures

taken and hanging them in our houses, should not this conference protest against the same?

*Resolved*, That this conference does not approve of taking pictures and having them on exhibition for the following scriptural reasons: I John 2:16; Colossians 3:17; Exodus 20:4; Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 4:14-19; Romans 1:19-23.

L. J. Heatwole, by request, read an article from the **Herald of Truth** of May 1, 1901, entitled, "Duties of Church Members," also an article from same paper entitled, "Danger Signals."

On motion, it is resolved that a fund be created by the several districts of this conference to defray the expenses attending the printing and mailing of the minutes, etc., of our conference, and also that the secretary of conference be made the treasurer of that fund.

Brother Samuel Shank, deceased, having been a member of the arranging Committee of conference, a vote was taken to fill that vacancy, which resulted in the choice of Joseph W. Geil.

Decided that the next conference be held at Springdale Church, on the first Friday in October, being the fourth day of October.

Minutes of conference read and approved.

After prayer and the singing of hymn No. 357, conference adjourned.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**:—\*Abram Shank, Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole.—3.

**Ministers**:—Abram B. Burkholder, Christian Good, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Jos. F. Heatwole, Gabriel D. Heatwole, George Brunk, Joseph Geil, Christian Brunk, Lewis Shank, Jacob Martin, Erasmus Shank, Martin Brunk, Joseph Hashbarger.—14.

**Deacons**:—Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Samuel M. Burkholder, Jacob Showalter, Timothy Wenger, Samuel Weaver, Christian Shank, Jacob Geil, Isaac Grove.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER, 1901

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Spring Dale Church, (Upper District), on Friday, October 4th, 1901, and opened at nine o'clock, a.m., by hymns Nos. 45 and 399 of Hymns and Tunes, followed by the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole, and prayer.

Christian Good, the Moderator, read the rules of the conference.

C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

The moderator stated that owing to the death of Sister Fifer he could not be present during the remainder of this conference, and therefore appointed A. Burkholder to resume his place.

L. J. Heatwole asked to have considered the propriety of holding only one communion meeting in the spring and one in the fall in his district, instead of two in the spring and two in the fall as has been our custom in the past.

A. P. Heatwole stated that the same inquiry might apply to his district.

\*This was the last conference attended by Bishop Abram Shank, his death having occurred about a month-and-a-half after this conference.

His brother, Preacher, Samuel Shank had died on April 30th previous to this conference.

Lewis Shank also made some remarks touching the same with regard to his district.

After prayer and singing hymn No. 201, on motion, conference adjourned for one and one-fourth hours for dinner.

Afternoon session opened by the use of hymn No. 225 and secret prayer.

The moderator now declared conference ready for business and gave liberty to the bishops to bring any matter before conference that they may have for its consideration.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole solemnly and impressively set forth the importance of more ministerial help in his district and asked conference to grant him the privilege of ordaining two ministers in his district. The request was unanimously granted.

The question with regard to holding communion meetings was again brought up for further consideration, and the consensus of opinion as expressed was that a change would not be for the best.

**Question I**—Is it consistent with our profession to invite members of other denominations to take part in our church service?

*Resolved*, That we use discretion and righteous judgment in matters pertaining to the question.

**Question II**—In as much as the church work in the West Virginia field is attended with much labor and disadvantage, would not this conference take the necessary steps to locate a minister in that part of the field under the care of Middle District.

After some earnest and important discussions the question was laid over for further consideration on tomorrow.

After prayer and singing hymn No. 214, on motion, conference adjourned to meet tomorrow at 8:30 o'clock.

Saturday morning, October 5th, 8:30 o'clock.

Conference opened by singing hymns Nos. 215 and 224 and the reading of the 73rd psalm by Bishop Lewis Shank, and silent prayer.

Conference was declared ready for business by the moderator.

Bishop Shank asked for some expressions by way of information on the subject of suing at law. Reference was made to several resolutions formerly passed upon by this conference, and we re-affirm them to be in conformity with the following scriptures: Matt. 5:40, I Cor. 6:1-8, I Thes. 5:15, etc.

Question two was again called and the following resolutions adopted: Resolved, That the bishops of this conference appoint and send a minister to the West Virginia field, and ordain a brother in the church there to the office of deacon to assist in caring for the flock there.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that the next conference will be held at the Weaver Church (Middle District), on the second Friday in May, 1902, being the 11th day of May.

Minutes of conference read and approved.

Conference adjourned with prayer and the use of hymn No. 296.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers**—Abram B. Burkholder, Christian Good, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Jos. F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin, Joseph Hashberger, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Joseph Geil, Perry Shank, George Showalter, Christian Brunk, Martin Brunk.—14.

**Deacons:**—Timothy Wenger, Isaac Grove, Benjamin Brenneman, Samuel M. Burkholder, Henry Blosser, Elias Brunk, Jacob Showalter.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 9th AND 10th, 1902

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Weaver Church (Middle District), on Friday, May 9th, 1902, and opened at nine o'clock, a. m., with devotional exercises as follows: By the use of hymns Nos. 1 and 20 of Hymn Book, the former in supplement, the reading of the fourth chapter of II Corinthians by Bishop L. J. Heatwole and silent prayer.

Christian Good, the Moderator, read the rules of the conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

L. J. Heatwole stated that Bishop Lewis Shank is being detained on account of a burial service and will not be here until the afternoon session.

#### Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened at 1:15 p. m. by the use of hymn No. 276 and prayer, after which the moderator declared conference ready for business and asked the bishops to present any matter of their own they might have in readiness, and nothing being presented, the moderator read:

**Question I**—To the Virginia Conference: Have we a right to reject or defer applicants for baptism or membership when they manifest fruits meet for repentance, if their past life has been a bad record?

*Answer.* The judgment and discretion of the bishop or minister in charge should be used in all such cases.

**Question II**—Shall the minister in charge of the work in West Virginia be authorized by this conference to hold counsel meetings, communion meetings, to perform the rite of baptism and the marriage of parties who are both members of the church, and issue certificates of standing to members of that State when applied for; it being understood that in all cases he make report to the bishop?

*Resolved.* That the minister in charge has the right and power to perform the duties recited in the question.

**Question III**—To what extent (if any) is it consistent for a minister of the Gospel or a lay member to use intoxicating liquors, in the light of 1 Thes. 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

*Answer.* To no extent except in cases where the use of spirits are prescribed or advised by a physician.

**Question IV**—Whereas the members of the Mennonite Church in Fauquier county, Virginia, have no house of worship, and the privilege of worship for any religious gatherings is to be withdrawn in the District School House, and believing a house of our own for worship to be a necessity for the advancement of the work, what encouragement or counsel can this conference give toward a new building?

*Resolved.* That the Moderator appoint a committee of three to look into the prospect of establishing a permanent church organization in Fauquier county, and the probable cost and advisability of building a new church house there, and to report the result of their investigations to our next conference.

**Later.**—The moderator announced A. P. Heatwole, Jos. W. Geil and S. M. Burkholder as the above committee.

On motion conference adjourned with singing and prayer, to meet to-morrow morning at half-past 8 o'clock.

### Saturday Morning

Conference opened with devotional exercises, viz. by singing hymn No. 184, the reading of the 13th chapter of Romans by Bishop Lewis Shank, and silent prayer.

**Question V**—Can this conference suggest some plan for conducting the ordinance of feet-washing in a more orderly manner in our congregations?

*Resolved.* That the deacons and deaconesses in charge see that this ordinance be observed in as orderly way as possible.

**Question VI**—Are we guilty of conforming to the world by having fashionable vehicles, wearing flashy neckties and high collars, fashionable watch chains and charms, sisters wearing gay colors in dresses, etc., (Rom. 12:2.)?

*Resolved.* That we are guilty, and that we will, by the help of God, try to live more consistent with our profession and labor for the purity and plainness of the church in accordance with the resolutions passed in the conference of September 1877, and the following—Rom. 12:2, I Cor. 7:31.

Christian Good, Moderator, C. H. Brunk, Secretary and Erasmus Shank, Jos. F. Heatwole and Joseph Geil, Arranging Committee—all for two years.

On motion conference adjourned with prayer and hymn No. 52.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin, Joseph Hashbarger, Abram B. Burkholder, Christian Good, Jos. F. Heatwole, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Jacob A. Heatwole, Samuel H. Rhodes, Peter S. Heatwole, Joseph Geil, George Showalter, Perry Shank, Christian Brunk, Martin Brunk.—16.

**Deacons:**—Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Samuel M. Burkholder, Jacob Showalter, Timothy Wenger, Samuel Weaver, Christian Shank, Jacob Geil.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 27.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 3rd AND 4th, 1902

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Trissel Church, Lower District, on Friday, October 3rd and 4th, 1902, and was opened at nine o'clock a. m. by use of hymns Nos. 76 and 74 of Sacred Hymnal, the reading of the 4th chapter of II Corinthians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole and prayer.

Christian Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

### Friday Afternoon

Afternoon session began by singing hymn No. 78 and prayer. The moderator declared conference ready for business, and asked the bishops to present anything they had in readiness.

Bishop Shank asked: Does an open transgression require an open confession before the church and the world—if so where is the Scripture requiring it?

In answer, many phases of this subject were mentioned and discussed and much light shed upon the same, and the conclusion arrived at is, that the church having such cases in hand must decide what is best for the purity of the church and all concerned and act accordingly, in the light of the following Scriptures: Gal. 6:1, I Tim. 5:20, 21 and I Thes. 5:14.

**Question I**—Can this conference fix a definite length of time for a minister to remain in his West Virginia appointment?

*Resolved*, That the time be limited to twelve months, beginning January 1st of each year and that the work of supplying the field or filling vacancies be made the duty of the Bishops of our conference.

By request, all joined heartily in singing the hymn, Coronation, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," etc.

**Question II**—Can we consistently hold those as members who get a divorce and marry another?

*Answer*, We cannot hold such a one as a member. See Mark 10:11, 12, Matt. 5:32.

Conference session opened Saturday morning with devotional exercises, viz, by singing hymn No. 145, the reading of the 5th chapter of 1 Peter, and prayer. The moderator announced conference ready for business.

We, the committee appointed by the last conference to consider the advisability of building a house of worship in Fauquier county, beg leave to submit the following report: We visited there and looked over the field and consulted with the members there, and decided that it would be best to defer the matter at present, and wait further developments.

A. P. Heatwole,  
Jos. W. Geil,  
S. M. Burkholder.

**Question III**—If a divorced member who marries again is put away from the church, can he or she be received into the church?

On motion, the question was tabled.

**Question IV**—Should not unfermented wine be used at the time of sacrament instead of fermented wine?

On motion, the question was tabled.

All joined in singing hymn No. 12.

Brother Henry Blosser asked for some thoughts on James 5:19, 20.

A talk on the subject of close communion, etc., followed, on which, by request, E. J. Berkey took a prominent part.

Shall we keep the same rotation of holding conferences as heretofore with respect to the districts?

*Answer*, Yes.

A. P. Heatwole stated that in turn the next conference will be held at the Springdale church (Upper District), on the second Friday in May, being the eighth day of the month.

Public preaching was announced for two o'clock.

On motion conference adjourned with prayer and the use of hymn No. 15.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers**—Joseph Geil, Christian Brunk, Perry Shank, George Showalter, Edward J. Berkey, Abram B. Burkholder, Christian Good, Jos. F. Heatwole, Samuel Rhodes, Jacob A. Heatwole, Sem S. Weaver, Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin, J. Snively Martin.—14.

**Deacons**—Elias Brunk, Christian Shank, Jacob Geil, Henry Blosser, Samuel M. Burkholder, Timothy Wenger, Isaac Grove, Samuel Weaver.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 25.

**CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 8th AND 9th, 1903**

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Springdale Church (Upper District), on Friday, May 8th, 1903 and opened at nine o'clock a. m. with devotional exercises as follows: By the use of hymns Nos. 45 and 433 in Hymns and Tunes, the reading of the second chapter of I John by Bishop Lewis Shank, and secret prayer.

Christian Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

**Afternoon Session**

The afternoon session opened by singing hymn No. 233 followed by secret prayer. The moderator declared conference ready for business.

Brother H. H. Good, from Tennessee, being present, was tendered a greeting of welcome by Bishop A. P. Heatwole, and invited to take part in the deliberations of conference.

The bishops having nothing for immediate consideration, the moderator presented a request sent to this conference by the church in Warwick county, Va., asking that someone be sent to preach for them and officiate in the observance of the sacrament.

*Resolved.* That the bishops of this conference send someone, either of their own member or some other suitable minister as requested.

**Question I**—The prayerhead covering being a sacred order, why then at the supreme moment of her initiation into the church by baptism should the covering be removed from the sister's head by the deaconess?

*Answer.* We think it is proper that the covering should be removed so that the element can be applied directly to the head of the applicant, and that the applicant wear the covering before in order to denote entire obedience in the beginning of a life for Christ.

The question of giving certificates of good standing to members removing to another congregation of our church, and also the giving of certificates to members desiring to unite with some other church, was discussed at some length, also two former resolutions of our conference were referred to and considered in connection, viz: Resolutions passed April, 1863, and October, 1882.

Decided that the bishop or minister in charge have the right to exercise his judgment and discretion agreeable to circumstances with respect to the question, and also with respect to the requirements of the former resolutions recited.

On motion, conference voted to adjourn, which followed devotional exercises and the singing of hymn No. 257.

**Saturday Morning**

Saturday morning session opened promptly at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymns Nos. 42 and 163, the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop L. J. Heatwole and prayer. The moderator declared conference ready for business, and asked the bishops if they had anything to present. Nothing being presented, question three was read as follows:

Is it in accordance with the Gospel for a minister to roach his hair and at the same time preach plainness?

After some discussion it is resolved, that we reaffirm a former resolution touching this question, viz: a resolution passed at a conference held September, 1877.

Self-denial was now suggested as a subject for discussion. During the discussion the following scriptures were referred to: Mark 8:34, Matt. 5:42, Luke 6:34, Rom. 12:10, Hebrews 10:34, etc.

The moderator stated that the time was not fully occupied yet and that the subject of obedience was suggested as a topic for consideration—see Rom. 5:19; I Samuel 15:22, etc.

On motion conference adjourned with silent prayer and the use of hymn No. 444.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Jacob Martin, Erasmus Shank, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Joseph Hashbarger, Christian Good, Abram B. Burkholder, J. Snively Martin, Jos. F. Heatwole, Jacob A. Heatwole, Samuel Rhodes, Sem S. Weaver, Joseph Geil, Perry Shank, George Showalter, Christian Brunk, Martin Brunk, Henry H. Good, of Tennessee.—17.

**Deacons:**—Timothy Wenger, Isaac Grove, Samuel M. Burkholder, Samuel Weaver, Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Christian Ebersole.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons, 27.

## CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 2nd AND 3rd, 1903

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Bank Church (Middle District), Friday, October 2nd, 1903. Opened at nine o'clock a. m.

Hymns Nos. 377 and 356 in New Hymnal were sung, followed by reading the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop Lewis Shank and silent prayer.

Christian Good, Moderator. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

### Afternoon Session

Afternoon session opened with the use of hymn No. 129, and prayer, after which the moderator declared conference ready for business and asked the bishops to present any matter they might have at that time. Nothing being presented the moderator read:

**Question I**—That the time of the business part of conference may be used to the best advantage, would it not be well for the committee on questions to serve during the session of conference as a committee to frame resolutions in answer to such questions as are ready to be acted upon by the conference?

A motion to sustain the above question was lost, and in lieu thereof the following motion was offered and approved, viz:

Moved that we have a committee on resolutions consisting of two members of conference to be appointed by the bishops at the beginning of the business session of conference, to serve for that conference.

The bishops announced the committee for the present conference—S. M. Burkholder and Eli Brunk.

**Question II**—Paul's definition of charity is that it suffereth long and is kind, thinketh no evil, believeth all things, hopeth all things and endureth all things; that it never faileth. How are we to apply this Scripture to one who is a transgressor of the Gospel and the rules of the church?

The resolutions not being fully prepared, hymn No. 53 was selected and sung.

Answer to question two. It is necessary to deal with the transgressor according to the Word of God; however much we love them or however hard

it may be for us. Yet we should not esteem such a one as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

**Question III**—Would not this conference recommend some plan or arrangement to help sustain loss in case of fire instead of taking policies in Organized Fire Insurance Companies?

After some discussion the answer is deferred until tomorrow.

A motion to adjourn was sustained and followed prayer, the singing of hymn No. 409 and an announcement for public preaching this evening and tomorrow afternoon.

### Saturday Morning Session

Saturday morning session opened at 8:30 o'clock by the use of hymn No. 141, "There is a land of pure delight, etc." the reading of the 12th chapter of Romans by bishop L. J. Heatwole and prayer.

The bishops having nothing for consideration at present, the moderator said that question three will again be resumed.

The subject of fire insurance having now been fully discussed and maturely considered, it is shown that the sentiment of conference is largely in favor of our members withdrawing from organized Fire Insurance Companies, and that the Council of each District appoint brethren to solicit funds for our members, when they have a loss by fire and whose property is not insured. See Gal. 6:2 and 1 Corinthians 10:24.

**Question IV**—What is the feeling of this conference in regard to holding Bible conferences?

After a lengthy discussion of the question, on motion the same was tabled.

**Question V**—Would it not be desirable to change the time of the fall conference to the second Friday of October instead of the first Friday? Decided to hold the fall conference on the second Friday in October in each year instead of the first Friday.

On motion conference adjourned with silent prayer and the singing of hymn No. 119.

Members of this conference:

**Bishops:**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Abram B. Burkholder, Christian Good, Peter S. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Jacob A. Heatwole, Samuel H. Rhodes, Sem. S. Weaver, Edward J. Berkey, Joseph Geil, George Showalter, Perry Shank, Christian Brunk, Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin, J. Snively Martin, Joseph Hashbarger.—16.

**Deacons:**—Samuel M. Burkholder, Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Jacob Showalter, Timothy Wenger, Isaac Grove, Christian Shank, Samuel Weaver.—8.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 27.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES MAY 13th AND 14th, 1904

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Brannemans Church (Lower District), on Friday, May 13th, 1904 and opened at nine o'clock a. m. by the use of hymns Nos. 377 and 123 in Church and Sunday-School Hymnal. The reading of the second chapter of Philippians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole and secret prayer.

Christian Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

**Afternoon Session**

The afternoon session opened at 1:15 o'clock with the use of hymn No. 202 and secret prayer.

The bishops appointed A. B. Burkholder and S. M. Burkholder as a committee on resolutions for this conference.

The moderator announced conference ready for business and gave the bishops opportunity to present such matters as they have in readiness for conference.

Bishop Lewis Shank desired the feeling of the members of conference with regard to the blessing asked for before the distribution of bread and wine at the sacrament, shall one bishop only act in that capacity or may another bishop or minister assist in that part of the ceremony?

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this conference that when there are two to take part in the administration of the communion that each of them may take part in asking for the blessing upon the emblems of bread and wine.

**Question I**—The church in Warwick County having by a letter from Preacher Daniel Shank of that place, addressed to Bishop L. J. Heatwole, made application to unite with this conference?

*Resolved*, That we heartily accept the proposition of the Warwick church to unite with this conference.

**Question II**—Is it consistent with the doctrine of Christ and in harmony with the non-resistant faith for a member of our faith to receive a Government pension?

*Resolved*, That this question be laid over to be considered at our next conference.

**Question III**—When questions that affect the whole church are presented would it not be better to defer them for deliberation to another conference rather than to decide them hastily? Decided that the question be dismissed.

Bishop Lewis Shank asked permission to ordain two deacons in his district.

Permission granted unanimously.

Is it proper to say that a person is self-expelled who is guilty of gross sins or should they be published openly?

On motion, this question is laid over for consideration tomorrow.

Moved that conference do now adjourn to 8:30 o'clock tomorrow, subject to suitable preparation for adjournment by the bishops, which was by prayer, the use of hymn No. 121 and the benediction.

**Saturday Morning Session**

Conference met Saturday morning, May 14, 1904, at 8:30 o'clock and engaged in singing hymn No. 277, "Begin the day with God, kneel down to him in prayer, etc." Bishop L. J. Heatwole read Philippians 3, which was followed by secret prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business and asked the bishops to present such matter as they have in readiness.

Nothing being offered the unfinished question of yesterday was again taken up, and the following resolution passed:

*Resolved*, That this conference advise that when it becomes fully known that members have forfeited their membership by transgression and are not

willing to give satisfaction, that such facts should be stated to the church, or publicly if thought best. See I Cor. 5:13; Eph. 5:11.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked that a question of a former conference relating to dinners being prepared and brought to the church to feed those in attendance upon conference be again referred to. Many opinions were exchanged and the consensus of opinion is that it should be only of a simple and substantial kind and not to indulge too much in dainties.

**Question IV**—Whereas it is the custom of the Church and in accordance with the Gospel that we provide for the poor, and whereas we believe that such charity is sometimes misplaced or abused by careless members, will this conference give an expression as to what the Scripture require of us as our duty on behalf of the poor?

*Resolved*, That this conference advise that none be refused unless it is clearly manifest that they are unworthy. "Charity suffereth long and is kind." I Corinthians 13:4.

Bishop Lewis Shank asked permission to ordain one or two ministers in his district, subject to the counsel and wishes of his district.

By vote privilege is unanimously granted.

Minutes of conference were read and approved.

The moderator announced that the election of conference officers for two succeeding years is now in order, and votes being taken for moderator and secretary resulted in the choice of C. Good and A. B. Burkholder for moderator (each of the two having had the same number of votes, on motion both are declared elected to serve between them) and C. H. Brunk for secretary; and votes being taken for an arranging committee, consisting of three members of conference, one from each district, resulted in the choice of Erasmus Shank, Upper District; Jos. F. Heatwole, Middle District and Jos. W. Geil, Lower District.

Hymn No. 111 was sung—"Take time to be holy, etc."

Bishop A. P. Heatwole stated that the next conference according to turn will be held in the Upper District on the second Friday in October, at the Springdale Church.

On motion, conference adjourned pursuant to suitable closing services conducted by the bishops which was prayer, singing the doxology and the benediction.

Members present at this conference:

**\*Bishops:**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Joseph Geil, Perry Shank, George Showalter, Christian Brunk, Abram B. Burkholder, Christian Good, Samuel H. Rodes, Sem S. Weaver, J. Snively Martin, Jacob A. Heatwole, Jos. F. Heatwole, Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin.—13.

**Deacons:**—Jacob Geil, Christian Shank, Elias Brunk, Henry Brosser, Jacob Showalter, Samuel M. Burkholder, Isaac Grove, Timothy Wenger, Samuel Weaver.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 25.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES OCTOBER 14th AND 15th, 1904

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Springdale Church

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\*Bishop Geo. Keener of Washington Co., Md., sent a message of love and greeting to this conference.

(Upper District), on Friday, October 14th, 1904, and opened at nine o'clock a. m. by the use of hymn No. 12 in Sacred Hymnal: "O for a Heart to Praise My God," etc. Scriptural lesson, viz: fourth chapter of Ephesians was read by Bishop Lewis Shank, which was followed by secret prayer.

A. B. Burkholder, one of the moderators, being present, read and explained rules of conference.

C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

We feel that we are gathering the fruits of the spirit this morning.

Is it not a fact that some of our best educated men ignore or misconstrue some of the plainest teachings of the Bible?

A bereaved brother asks for the prayers of the church in his behalf.

The essential qualifications for a preacher is to be spirit-filled.

I was impressed with the Savior's language during our trip to West Virginia that "The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few."

Dire results follow neglected opportunities; we, as deacons, have most trouble with those who are most neglected.

How many are living in luxury and ease that could lend spiritual help to his fallen brother?

The moderator announced that the time has arrived for a noon intermission, which will be one and one-fourth hours. After a suitable closing by the Bishops, which was by prayer and the use of hymn No. 92, "Oh, For a Closer Walk With God," etc.

### Afternoon Session

Opened by singing the words "Holy Spirit, Heavenly Guide," etc., and prayer.

Moderator now declared conference ready for business.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole read a card from the Warwick Congregation, which in substance asked conference to grant them the privilege of ordaining a deacon in that congregation, and by vote, after some remarks by Bishops and others, the privilege is granted.

**Question I**—Is it consistent for our members to go to other churches on wedding occasions and take part in making displays that are not allowed in our own church?

*Resolved*, It is not consistent.—Matt. 5:16; I John 2:16, 17; Romans 12:2.

**Question II**—As it is becoming a common practice with men and boys at some of our places of worship to spend much of their time just outside of the church doors, smoking—both during the time of worship and immediately afterward:—What does the conference recommend as being the proper way to bring about a discontinuance of the habit?

*Resolved*, That parents instruct their children at home, and instead of sending them to service, take them and keep them with them as much as possible; also, that all the members do what they can to avoid the trouble.

**Question III**—What plan would the conference advise as being the best at this time for bringing about a more perfect organization among the congregations in West Virginia?

*Resolved*, That our present method of sending workers to the West Virginia field be continued, with authority given to the Bishops to increase the helpers as may be deemed necessary.

On motion, conference adjourned till tomorrow morning at 8:30 o'clock

subject to a suitable closing by the Bishops, which was by prayer and the singing of the tune, "More Love to Thee," etc.

### Saturday Morning Session

Conference opened on Saturday morning at 8:30 by singing hymn No. 104, "I Love Thy Kingdom Lord," etc., and reading of the second chapter of Ephesians, by Bishop L. J. Heatwole and secret prayer.

The question continued from last conference was now taken up for consideration, viz: "Is it consistent with the doctrine of Christ and in harmony with the non-resistant faith for a member of our faith to receive a Government Pension?

*Resolved*, That the church keep her own poor and that we consider it inconsistent for our members to make application for a pension. Yet, if members are receiving a pension, we do not feel to take upon ourselves the responsibility of saying they shall no longer receive a pension.

**Question IV**—Is there any scriptural authority for exposing the dead to view in the church in time of funerals, and if so, would it not be best to confine the privilege to the family of the deceased and the near relatives?

*Resolved*, That we consider the Scriptures silent on this question, but we would advise that those in charge act as they see best in the matter.

**Question V**—What is the mind of the conference on the question of renewing more active gospel work in the Winchester District?

*Resolved*, That this conference make an active effort to revive the church at Winchester by sending some one at least once a month and, if necessary, send some one to make a special effort.

**Question VI**—As Brother P. S. Hartman, of this conference district, has served faithfully and well as a representative of the Mennonite Evangelizing and Benevolent Board, would it not be well for this conference to ratify the appointment?

*Resolved*, That this conference ratify the appointment.

**Question VII**—Should not our members be admonished betimes to be in the order of the church, in conformity, especially the Sunday School officers?

*Resolved*, That for Teachers and Superintendents to teach the doctrine of non-conformity to the world, they should be able to show by their example that they believe what they teach, and recommend that they be admonished. Romans 2:21, 22 and 23 and Matt. 23:3.

**Question VIII**—Does this conference advise its members to give public or private invitations to persons who are not members of our church to attend conference?

*Resolved*, That the question be tabled.

**Question IX**—Is the tree of life mentioned in Gen. 3:22 the same as that referred to in Rev. 22:2 and 14?

*Resolved*, That the question be laid aside.

**Question X**—Having an Old People's Home as a Church institution; Would not this conference deem it advisable to help sustain the same and then send our old people there?

*Resolved*, That we encourage the work by our voluntary support, and when old folks are willing, or desirous to go, that they be sent.

The financial report on printing was read and approved.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that the next conference will be held at Weavers Church on May 12th, 1905.

Conference minutes were read and approved.

On motion, conference adjourned after prayer and singing hymn 105.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin, Martin Brunk, Jacob R. Hildebrand, Christian Good, Abram B. Burkholder, Jos. F. Heatwole, Samuel H. Rhodes, Jacob A. Heatwole, J. Snively Martin, Sem S. Weaver, Joseph Geil, George Showalter, Perry Shank, Henry H. Good.—15.

**Deacons:**—Timothy Wenger, Isaac Grove, Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Samuel M. Burkholder.—5.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 23.

\*Deacon Samuel Weaver died a few months after this conference convened, March 8, 1905. Deacon Peter Blosser died on Nov. 23, 1904, following this conference.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES MAY 12th AND 13th, 1905

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Weaver Church (Middle District), Friday, May 12th, 1905 and opened promptly at 9 o'clock a. m. by the use of hymn No. 377 in Church and S. S. Hymnal, "And We Are Yet Alive," etc., the reading of the 12th chapter of Romans by Bishop A. P. Heatwole, and secret prayer. Conference again engaged in singing hymn No. 123, "Choose my Path, O Blessed Savior," etc.

A. B. Burkholder, one of the moderators, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

L. J. Heatwole, the resident Bishop, extended a greeting of welcome to visiting brethren and sisters, and invited them to a place in conference.

Brother Daniel Shenk gave a report of the standing of the Warwick Congregation, viz., that peace and harmony exists.

Aside from the bishops, 28 ministers and deacons responded with words of exhortation, etc., as called upon by Deacon Jacob Showalter, six of whom are members of other conferences, and the following thoughts were gleaned from their remarks:

We are the apostles' successors who were commanded to go into all the world and preach the gospel.

The word of God should be to us like a letter from a friend or companion we love.

During my thirty years absence I see that some of the stalwart soldiers of the cross have passed away and their labors placed on other shoulders. What will the harvest of our sowing and reaping be?

Conferences should not alone provide for themselves, but provide means by which to wield an influence upon others.

We have had a fairly good year in Ohio for the cause of Christ.

My mind is absorbed with the things that pertain to our beloved Church.

The old, old story is as sweet this morning as it ever was.

After the toils of life these conference seasons come as a refreshing shower.

I trust we will at least make an effort to retain the rich admonitions we have had the privilege of listening to this morning.

The moderator stated that the time for noon intermission has arrived,

which was subsequent to prayer, the use of hymn No. 203, "Spirit so Holy," etc., and the benediction.

### Afternoon Session

Conference convened again for the afternoon session by singing hymn No. 67, "Purer in Heart," etc., and secret prayer.

It having been made the duty of the Bishops at a former conference to appoint a committee on Resolutions for each conference, the brethren Daniel Shenk and S. M. Burkholder are named as such committee for this conference.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked conference to permit the ordination of a deacon in his District, due to the loss by death of Deacon S. H. Weaver.

On motion said request is granted.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that a similar request comes to conference from the Warwick Church for a minister to be ordained in Norfolk County. Brother Daniel Shenk made some remarks relative to the request, giving the distance as forty miles from the Warwick congregation; that they have three ministers in Warwick County, and that aside from expenses and other inconveniences they might at present serve the church in Norfolk County, but that he thought it expedient to ordain a man there.

On motion the privilege is granted.

Brother L. J. Heatwole stated that the old custom of the earlier Mennonite ministers having been to close each petition with the Lord's Prayer, he asks why the present deviation from the custom. What do we infer to be the teaching of God's Word along this line?

At this stage of conference there was an informal adjournment of the same to give place for the funeral service of Sister Mrs. Jos. Swope to be held here at this hour.

### Saturday Morning Session

Conference met this, Saturday morning, at 8:30 o'clock and began services by singing hymn No. 129, "Sun of My Soul," etc., and hymn No. 70, "Abide With Me," etc., the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop Lewis Shenk, and secret prayer.

Conference being declared ready for business, the unfinished question of yesterday was again resumed, and after due consideration thereof, on motion, the same is tabled.

Brother L. J. Heatwole stated that after consulting with his Bishop brethren, he has decided to ask conference to consider the advisability of ordaining a minister in the West Virginia field.

On motion the privilege is granted, subject to the church counsel of the Middle District.

**Question I**—As the church here does not ask an acknowledgment of a member that marries outside of the church, would it not be right for our minister to officiate in marrying such as are outside of the church, especially children of our own members?

After a lengthy and interesting discussion of the same, on motion, the question is tabled.

**Question II**—Can this conference recommend some plan for the church to become more united in conformity? Rom. 12:2.

*Resolved*, That we believe it to be necessary to continue advising and entreating our members to be more conformed to the regulations of the church

in dress, but that we ever use patience, forbearance and charity in the matter. "Come now and let us reason together." Isaiah 1:18.

Bishop Shank stated that as the Lower District is entitled to the next conference, the same will be held at the Zion Church on the second Friday in October, 1905, being the 13th day of the month.

The report of the conference minute fund was read and approved.

The Secretary's report was now read, and no exceptions being taken thereto, the same stands approved.

On motion conference adjourned after prayer and the use of hymn No. 141, "Dismiss Us With Thy Blessings, Lord," etc.

Members present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—Anthony P. Heatwole, Lewis J. Heatwole, Lewis Shank.—3.

**Ministers:**—Erasmus Shank, Jacob Martin, Martin Brunk, Daniel Shenk, Edw. J. Berkey, Christian Good, Christian Brunk, Abram B. Burkholder, Jos. F. Heatwole, J. Snively Martin, Jacob A. Heatwole, Sem S. Weaver, Samuel H. Rhodes, Joseph Geil, George Showalter, Joseph Shank, Perry Shank, Menno S. Steiner, of Ohio, Joseph Boll, of Pennsylvania.—19.

**Deacons:**—Christian Shank, Jacob Geil, David S. Geil, John J. Wenger, Elias Brunk, Jacob Showalter, Samuel M. Burkholder, Henry Blosser, Timothy Wenger.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 31.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES OCTOBER 13th AND 14th, 1905

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at Zion Church (Lower District), on Friday, October 13th, 1905, at nine o'clock a. m. and opened by singing hymns Nos. 1 and 17 in the Church and Sunday School Hymnal; the reading of the sixth chapter of II Corinthians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole was followed by secret prayer. Conference again engaged in singing hymn No. 316, "He Keepeth Me Ever," etc.

C. D. Wenger, Secretary, pro tem.

The moderator, A. B. Burkholder, read the rules of conference.

Twenty-three ministers and deacons then responded with short addresses as called upon by Deacon S. M. Burkholder, and the following thoughts were presented:

When we look into the world and see the sin that is in' it, we ought to be active.

There is a high and noble calling—Take my yoke upon you and learn of me.

An opportunity that is gone by is gone forever.

If you want to put a damper on your work just deviate from your Christianity and conform to the world; if you want power stand up before the world, look her squarely in the face and let her know that you are not ashamed of the gospel.

May the peace that passeth all understanding pervade this conference.

In a conference of this kind we throw a pebble in the water and wavelets go out for good for time and eternity.

I came to this conference for encouragement and I have gotten it already.

On motion conference adjourned for the noon intermission by prayer, the use of hymn No. 312, "Rock of Ages," and the benediction.

**Afternoon Session**

Conference began the afternoon session by the use of hymn No. 307, "In That Day," and with prayer.

The moderator announced the conference ready for business and according to conference rules the following committee on resolutions was named by the bishops: Joseph Shank and E. J. Berkey.

**Question I**—A petition from several members in Halifax county asked that they be cared for by this conference and also become a part of same.

*Resolved*, That this conference accept the membership in Halifax county as a part of the Virginia Conference.

**Question II**—Would it not be well to have the names and addresses of all members of conference, present, printed on the minutes of conference?

*Resolved*, That the secretary be instructed to have the names and addresses of members of conference, present, printed on the conference minutes.

Conference adjourned for the day by prayer, singing No. 103, "I'll Live for Him," and the benediction.

**Saturday Morning Session**

Conference opened at 8:30 o'clock by the use of hymns Nos. 49 and 75. "Oh, Lift Me up to Thee," and "Send the Light." Bishop L. J. Heatwole then read the third chapter of Colossians after which secret prayer was engaged in.

**Question III**—Whereas Christ says Swear not at all, what form of affirmation should we use?

*Resolved*, That as the word teaches "Swear not at all," Matt. 5:33-37; Jas. 5, 12, we erase "Solemnly Swear," and "So help me God," and simply affirm, by neither raising the hand nor kissing the Bible. In public courts simply say Yea or Nay.

**Question IV**—What can we accept as conformity among the brotherhood?

On motion the question was laid aside.

**Question V**—Is it consistent for our church to accept members from any other church who have been baptized in any other way than by pouring, without re-baptizing them?

After a lengthy and interesting discussion the question was, on motion, laid aside till some future time.

The time and place for the next conference was designated by Bishop A. P. Heatwole, as Friday, May 11, 1906 at Springdale Church (Upper District).

Conference minutes were read, corrected and approved.

On motion conference adjourned after prayer and singing hymn No. 114, "Lead Me On" and the benediction.

Members attending this conference:

**Bishops**—L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va., Box 2.—3.

**Ministers**—E. C. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; J. H. Martin, Waynesboro, Va.; George B. Showalter, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; M. W. Brunk, Waynesboro, Va., A. B. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jacob A. Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va.; J. S. Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Jos. Shank, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; H. H. Good, South Boston, Va.; D. S. Brunk, La Junta, Colorado;

Jos. F. Heatwole, Dayton, Va.; Jos. W. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; E. J. Berkey, Auburn, Va.—15.

**Deacons:**—S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; J. J. Wenger, Linville Depot, Va.; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va.; David S. Geil, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 7; Jacob W. Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jacob Geil, T. J. Wenger, Stuarts Draft, Va.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 27.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 11th AND 12th, 1906

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Springdale Church (Upper District), on Friday morning, May 11, at nine o'clock a. m. and opened by singing from "Church and Sunday-School Hymnal" the words "Savior like a shepherd lead us," and also hymns Nos. 377 and 52, by the reading of Col. 3:1, 17 by Bishop Lewis Shank, and secret prayer.

Brother Christian Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

Success in the Christian work does not depend so much on the numbers as on consecration.

A wall was necessary to protect Jerusalem; so we need to be hedged about with God's word.

Other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, but how do we build upon it?

Forenoon session closed with prayer and song No. 140, "Some day these conflicts will be o'er."

#### Afternoon Session

The opening of the afternoon session consisted of the use of hymn No. 146, a short exhortation by Bishop A. F. Heatwole and secret prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business and asked the Bishops to appoint a committee on resolutions as provided by the action of a former conference. Accordingly S. M. Burkholder and A. B. Burkholder were appointed.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole asked whether, where the membership on communion occasions is large, the Bishop in charge should be permitted to select as many assistants in the distribution of the emblems as would seem to him necessary.

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this conference that the Bishop in charge of our communion services shall have the privilege of selecting as many assistants to distribute the emblems as he may think necessary.

Would it not be in harmony with the scriptures to use unleavened bread at our communion?

*Resolved*, That we see no scriptural reason why either unleavened or leavened bread may not be used.

Would it not be in harmony with the scriptures to use unfermented wine at our communion?

On motion the question was tabled.

Is it in harmony with our profession as a non-resistant people for a member to report to government officials an individual who has violated the laws of the government?

On motion the committee on resolutions is instructed to prepare a resolution on the foregoing question by tomorrow morning.

On motion the afternoon session closed with prayer, singing the hymn "Purer in heart, O God, etc." and the benediction.

### Saturday Morning Session

The session Saturday morning at 8:30 o'clock began by singing the hymn "O Lord, thy heavenly grace impart," and the hymn, "Use me, O my gracious Savior, etc.," the reading of the third chapter of Philippians by Bishop L. J. Heatwole and prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business, and stated that the Bishops have the privilege of first presenting any matter that they may have.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked the feeling of conference as to the advisability of ordaining a Bishop in the Warwick-Norfolk congregation, consisting of about 60 members.

*Resolved*, That this conference advise the ordination of a bishop for the Warwick-Norfolk congregation provided it meets the approbation of said congregation.

The resolution continued from yesterday and to be prepared for action this morning was read and passed as follows:

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this conference that it is not a violation of the non-resistant principle to report a transgressor of the law in obedience to the demands of the civil authorities, but should not be done in a spirit of personal revenge or for profit. Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13, 14.

Should we observe and teach fasting as mentioned in Matt. 6:16-18?

*Resolved*, That this conference recommend that fasting be taught and practiced, especially on entering upon important duties or occasions and upon intense desire to obtain special blessings, according to Matt. 17:14-21; Acts 13:2,3.

Should not this conference arrange to carry out the decision of a former conference to send a minister to Winchester once a month?

On motion it is resolved to appoint a minister to take charge of the work at Winchester, and that it be made the duty of the Bishops to appoint said minister and that his traveling expenses be borne by this conference district.

Upon consideration the bishops announced the appointment of Jacob A. Heatwole to take charge of the work at Winchester.

The moderator stated that he thought that much improvement might be made in the method of conducting the business portion of our conference by assigning topics to be discussed to certain members of conference before the time of conference.

On motion the question was dismissed.

The moderator announced that the election of conference officers for two succeeding years is now in order, and votes being taken for moderator and secretary resulted in the choice of C. Good for moderator and C. H. Brunk for secretary; and votes being taken for an arranging committee, consisting of three members of conference, one from each district, resulted in the choice of Erasmus Shank, Upper District; Jos. F. Heatwole, Middle District, and Jos. W. Geil, Lower District.

While the vote was being taken the congregation engaged in singing No. 52, "Would you know the love of Jesus," etc., and No. 123, "Choose my path O blessed Savior."

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that in turn the Middle District will be entitled to the next conference, and will be held at the Bank Church on the second Friday in October, being October 12, 1906.

Conference financial report was read and approved.

On motion conference adjourned after a short exhortation from Bishop L. Shank, secret prayer, the singing of hymn No. 121 and the benediction.

The following are the names and addresses of members of conference present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va., Box 2.—3.

**Ministers:**—E. C. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; J. H. Martin, Waynesboro, Va.; A. B. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jacob A. Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va.; J. S. Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Jos. Shank, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; H. H. Good, South Boston, Va.; Jos. F. Heatwole, Dayton, Va.; Jos. W. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; C. Good, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Samuel H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4.—13.

**Deacons:**—S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; J. J. Wenger, Linville Depot, Va.; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va.; David S. Geil, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 7; Jacob W. Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va.; T. J. Wenger, Stuarts Draft, Va.; H. L. Rhodes, Auburn, Va.; Benjamin Brenneman, Moheia, Va.; Christ. Eversole, Riverton, Va.; Isaac Grove, Mt. Meridian, Va.—12.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 28.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 12th AND 13th, 1906

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Bank Church (Middle District), on Friday, October 12th, at nine o'clock a. m. and was opened by singing from "Church and Sunday School Hymnal" the words "And are we yet alive," etc., also hymn No. 91.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the first chapter of Philippians, which was followed by secret prayer.

C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

Christian Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference, and made some remarks upon the same.

Brother J. D. Wert reported the conditions of the Norfolk and Warwick Churches as encouraging.

Brother Jacob A. Heatwole reported the condition of the Winchester congregation as not very encouraging, but believes it should not be abandoned.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole extended a greeting of welcome to visiting members from other Conference Districts and invited their mutual co-operation in the deliberations of this conference.

The morning session of conference closed with prayer and the use of the hymn beginning "Nearer Still Nearer My Heart," etc.

The moderator announced the intermission to be one and one-fourth hours.

#### Afternoon Session

Opened by singing hymn No. 8, "Once more we come before our God, etc," followed with secret prayer.

The moderator requested the appointment of a committee on resolutions for this conference which is as follows: Timothy Wenger and Joseph W. Geil.

The moderator declared conference ready for business and accorded the Bishops the privilege of first presenting such matters as they may have for consideration, and nothing being offered, the following was presented:

**Question I**—What does this conference advise in regard to our members attending the Jamestown Exposition?

Brother Wert being from near the section of country where the Exposition is to be held, gave a brief statement as to what the Exposition is likely to be, viz., largely of a worldly nature.

Brother Brunk gave the attitude of the western churches toward similar institutions, as being opposed, and the question being further and fully discussed the following resolution was passed:

*Resolved*, That this conference regards it wrong for members to attend the Jamestown Exposition and similar institutions according to the following scriptures; Romans 12:2; 1:32; Gal. 6:14; Jas. 1:27; 4:4, and I John 2:15.

**Question II**—Would this conference recommend the receiving of persons to membership with us who come from other denominations while they are yet in a back-slidden state, and out of communion with their own church.

*Resolved*, That we use wisdom in receiving backsliders from other churches as well as our own, and see that they bring fruits meet for repentance.

**Question III**—Since there are many instances where application is being made for a church letter by members who remove from our conference district into other states, would it not be well for this body to adopt some fixed form for writing a certificate of membership, and also say who is the proper one to issue it?

*Resolved*, That we leave this question in the hands of the Bishops to use their own discretion in the matter.

On motion, conference voted to adjourn, following suitable closing exercises which was by prayer and the use of hymn "My faith looks up to Thee, etc., etc." and the benediction.

### Saturday Morning Session

Conference met at half past eight o'clock and opened by singing hymn No. 282, "Now the shades of night are gone, etc., etc." also hymn No. 278, "I owe the Lord a morning song, etc., etc." by the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians, by Bishop J. D. Wert and secret prayer.

Conference now being declared ready for business, and the Bishops having nothing for conference at this time, the following question was presented:

**Question IV**—How should the standing of members be considered who habitually absent themselves from counsel meeting and communion?

*Resolved*, That after proper visitations have failed to restore such person to the communion of the church he should be no longer held as a member.

**Question V**—What is the attitude of this conference on the subject of paying tithes? See Gen. 28:20,22; Lev. 27:30; Num. 18:21; Luke 18:12.

*Resolved*, That we are not under the law that made tithing compulsory, but that it is the duty of Christian people to give liberally for the extension of God's kingdom and to the necessities of the poor, according to I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7.

Congregation engaged in singing hymn No. 27, "Come Thou Almighty King, etc."

Acts 2:44-45 giving an account of the early church as having all things common, was interestingly discussed along the line of Christian duty. It not being a command that we should have things in common, we have a right to choose that which promotes the highest good.

The moderator stated that it was time that we should prepare to adjourn.

Bishop Shank said he is glad to say that his District is entitled to the next conference and that it will be held at Lindale Church on the second Friday in May (May 10th, 1907).

Conference adjourned after hearing the financial report, the reading and correction of the secretary's report, a short exhortation by Bishop A. P. Heatwole, prayer, the use of hymn No. 44, "More Like Thee, etc., " and the benediction.

The following are the names and addresses of members of Conference present at this conference:

**Bishops:**—L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va., Box 2; Geo. R. Brunk, Inman, Kans.; J. D. Wert, Hearing, Va.—5.

**\*Ministers:**—E. C. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; J. H. Martin, Waynesboro, Va.; Jacob A. Heatwole, Harrisonburg, Va.; J. S. Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Jos. Shank, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; Jos. F. Heatwole, Dayton, Va.; Jos. W. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; C. Good, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Samuel H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; Aaron C. Good, Sterling, Ill.; C. H. Becker, Concord, Tenn.; R. L. Smith, Rich Mt., W. Va.—14.

**Deacons:**—S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; J. J. Wenger, Linville Depot, Va.; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va.; David S. Geil, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 7; Jacob W. Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; T. J. Wenger, Stuarts Draft, Va.; Isaac Grove, Mt. Meridian, Va.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 10th AND 11th, 1907

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Linville Church (Lower District), on Friday, May 10th, 1907, and was opened at nine o'clock a. m. by the use of hymns Nos. 377 and 303, the reading of the twentieth chapter of Acts by Bishop A. P. Heatwole and secret prayer.

The rules of conference were read by the moderator, Brother Christian Good. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

Brother L. J. Heatwole read an extract from a letter written by Bishop J. D. Wert, giving the condition of the Norfolk-Warwick congregation of which he is bishop, showing that peace prevails generally, and that there have been 5 accessions to the church since our last conference, besides several that have moved in from other districts.

Forenoon session closed with prayer and song.

#### Afternoon Session

Opened by singing the hymn, "Jesus from whom all blessings flow, etc., " and secret prayer.

\*Preacher Joseph Hashbarger died October 7, 1906—just five days before the meeting of this conference.

The moderator requested the appointment of a committee on resolutions for this conference, which resulted as follows: Erasmus C. Shank and Samuel H. Rhodes.

The moderator declared conference ready for business and accorded the bishops the privilege of first presenting such matters as they may have for consideration, whereupon

L. J. Heatwole asked permission to ordain one or two ministers in his district, and in doing so he felt that the request and what it implied should be looked upon and treated as a very serious and weighty matter, and that his co-laborers are of the same mind that such request should be made.

A. P. Heatwole made a similar request for his district, viz., that he be permitted to ordain a minister for the congregations of his district, and a deacon for the Mountain View Station.

**Question I**—Is it not in accordance with the Bible that all members at counsel meeting be asked to express peace with all men as well as with the Church. Luke 23:54; Acts 7:60; Romans 12:18, etc.

*Resolved*, That the Bible teaches us to live peaceably with all men as much as lieth in us, and therefore we think it according to the Bible.

**Question II**—Wouldn't it be right and proper to consider the subject of "ministers visiting the sick" more in the future than has been done in the past?

*Resolved*, That it is the duty of every Christian to visit the sick frequently. James 1:27.

**Question III**—The sentiment of our people, as a rule, being strongly against the liquor traffic, is it consistent for our members to take orders from, and deliver goods to saloon-keepers; such things as milk, groceries and other household supplies?

While a resolution was being prepared the congregation sang the hymn "Some days are dark and dreary," etc.

*Resolved*, That as the Bible teaches us to abstain from every appearance of evil, therefore we believe it to be our duty to stay out of saloons as well as other questionable places.

**Question IV**—What is the feeling of this conference towards our members wearing of clothing so as to expose their arms and a portion of their body to public view?

*Resolved*, That as the Scriptures plainly teaches that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, therefore such clothing is improper and not becoming to women professing Godliness. I Tim. 2:9, 10.

The moderator requested a closing service, which was by prayer, hymn 310, "Nearer still nearer," etc. and the benediction.

#### Saturday Morning Session

Conference met at half-past eight o'clock, and opened by singing hymns Nos. 114 and 29, the reading of the fourth chapter Ephesians by Bishop L. J. Heatwole, and secret prayer.

The moderator announced conference ready for business and requested the bishops to present any matters that they may have for consideration, whereupon L. J. Heatwole made a statement with regard to the sale of the church house at Kernstown, Va. Said the amount realized will be about \$100.00 after paying certain expenses connected therewith; that he desires conference to ratify the sale and decide what shall be done with the money.

Brother C. Good made further statements with regard to the sale of the

property and the condition of the congregation in that locality.

On motion, the sale of said property is ratified, and it is

*Resolved*, That the fund arising from the sale of the same be turned over to our Virginia Board of Home Missions and Charities, to be used for the benefit of the West Virginia Mission.

**Question V**—Is it in harmony with the teachings of Christ and the Apostles for a minister to defer applicants for baptism when he has not been authorized by the bishop to administer baptism? See Matt. 28:19; Acts 16:33; also Acts 8:37, 38.

On motion, the question is tabled.

**Memo.**—A certain doctor complains that too many people call upon him for treatment on Sunday, seemingly to avoid taking the time in the week day, hence the following query:

**Question VI**—Is it in harmony with the Scriptures for persons to delay going to a doctor until on Sunday for the treatment of chronic cases?

After some discussion of the subject and other inconsistencies along the same line, the following resolution was adopted:

*Resolved*, That to make it a point to go to a doctor for treatment on Sunday is not in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures.

**Question VII**—What is the sense of this conference with regard to adding a goodly number of workers, especially ministers, in the Upper and Lower Districts, in order to more thoroughly work the mountainous and outlying sections?

*Resolved*, That this conference feels to encourage the work of sending ministers and laborers to outside or mission points.

**Question VIII**—Would it not be in harmony with the teachings of the Bible that at our communion meetings during the time of feet washing, that the washing commence with those in the pulpit, thence back bench after bench until each tier of benches are through, and so on, in harmony with I Cor. 14:40?

*Resolved*, That the same be granted where the membership is sufficiently large to require it.

The moderator stated that the time to adjourn had not fully arrived, whereupon the bishops gave short talks on matters pertaining to conference and its relations to the church.

It was announced that the next conference will be held at Springdale Church, Upper District, on the second Friday in October, being the 11th of the month.

Conference minutes, together with the financial report, were read and approved, when, after singing hymn No. 386, conference adjourned with prayer and the benediction.

The following are the names and addresses of members of conference present at this conference:

**Bishops**—L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va., Box 2.—3.

**\*Ministers**—C. E. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; J. H. Martin, Waynesboro, Va.; J. S.

\*Preacher Christian Brunk died in December previous to this conference. He was one of the most striking figures in this body and was also one of its most regular attendants—seldom missed a conference through the entire 45 years of his ministry.

Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Jos. Shank, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; Jos. F. Heatwole, Dayton, Va.; Jos. W. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; C. Good, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Samuel H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; H. H. Good, South Boston, Va.; A. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.—12.

**Deacons:**—S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; J. J. Wenger, Linville Depot, Va.; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va.; David S. Geil, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 7; Jacob W. Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Isaac Grove, Weyers Cave, Va.; Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jacob Geil, Edom, Va.; C. J. Shank, Singers Glen, Va.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 11th AND 12th, 1907

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Springdale Church (Upper District), on Friday, October 11th, 1907, and was opened at nine o'clock a. m. by the use of hymns Nos. 277 and 377 in the Church and Sunday School Hymnal, the reading of the first chapter of Philippians by Bishop L. J. Heatwole, and followed by secret prayer.

In the absence of the secretary, S. M. Burkholder was appointed secretary pro tem.

The rules of conference were then read by the moderator, Christian Good.

Fifteen ministers and seven deacons then gave short talks, from which the following thoughts were gleaned:

We hope as long as we live we may stand together in the work of the Lord.

If we are not fully equipped with the whole armour of God, we will not be able to teach the doctrine of Christ.

If even we feel ourselves weak, others cannot do our part of the work.

We can only make the work of the Lord a pleasure by being ready to do our part.

Let us know that the work we do, we do because we love Jesus.

May not some soul be lost because we are not in the work early and late, even through the heat of the day.

In order that our preaching might be effective, we must believe what we preach.

We hope the most intense interest that has been expressed may prevail in every nook and corner of our beloved church.

We are no doubt here through the labors of those who sleep in the dust, then let our lives be such that when we sleep in death our influence may still go on.

Deacon H. L. Rhodes, of Auburn, also sent a greeting of love to this conference.

Conference then adjourned for dinner with secret prayer and singing hymn No. 106.

#### Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened with singing hymn No. 53 and prayer.

The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

The brethren E. J. Berky and Elias Brunk were chosen a committee on resolutions.

**Question I**—Should not this conference appoint a brother to act with the General Board of Missions and Charities?

*Resolved*, That this conference appoint a brother to act with the General Board of Missions and Charties.

Brother P. S. Hartman was appointed.

**Question II**—Should not this conference select two or more of its members to represent it and the Virginia Church on whatsoever matters of interest there may be for us in General Conference Work?

After considerable discussion the question was deferred till tomorrow when the question was again taken up with the following decision:

*Resolved*, That this conference defer to vote on this question till some future session of conference.

**Question III**—“I was sick and ye visited me.” How is this passage to be reconciled with the present rules of some physicians that forbid the sick from being visited even by our ministers?

Inasmuch as the Gospel commands us to visit the sick we should obey God rather than man. Acts 5:29. Especially where a desire is expressed.

Conference then adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 310.

#### Saturday Morning Session

Saturday morning session opened at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymns Nos. 126 and 44, followed by the reading of I John 3rd chapter and secret prayer.

**Question IV**—Bishop A. P. Heatwole asked the advisability of granting Brother E. J. Berky, of Warrenton, Va., the privilege of locating in another field of labor.

*Resolved*, That we grant the brother the privilege of locating elsewhere if he sees proper.

**Question V**—Whereas the saloon and the liquor traffic has become such an alarming evil should not this conference appoint a committee who shall request the publishers of the newspapers of our county to leave out of their publications all liquor advertisements, and also to act in any capacity where our church should be represented to suppress this great evil?

*Resolved*, That this conference as a body voice a strong influence in suppressing liquor evils without sacrificing Gospel principles.

The moderator stated that it was time to prepare to adjourn.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that the next conference would be held at Weavers Church (Middle District), May 8th, 1908.

Conference adjourned after hearing the financial report, and the reading of the secretary's report, a short admonition and caution by Bishop Lewis Shank, prayer and singing hymn No. 409.

The following are the names and addresses of members of conference present:

**Bishops**—Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va., Box 2; L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2.—3.

**Ministers**—Jos. W. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; George B. Shewalter, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; A. B. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jos. W. Coffman, Dayton, Va., R. F. D. No. 1; C. Good, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; J. S. Martin, Hinton, Va.; S. H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; J. Early Suter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Jacob H. Martin, Waynes-

boro, Va.; E. C. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; Etter Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va.; H. H. Good, South Boston, Va.; E. J. Berkey, Warrenton, Va.—15.

**Deacons:**—Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; Isaac Grove, Weyer's Cave, Va.; T. J. Wenger, Stuart's Draft, Va.; Christian Eversole, Riverton, Va.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 25.

### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 8th AND 9th, 1908

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Weaver Church (Middle District), on Friday, May 8th, and opened at nine o'clock a. m. with devotional services, as follows: by singing hymns 377 and 204 from "Church and Sunday School Hymnal," the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole and secret prayer.

C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

The rules of conference were read by the moderator, Christian Good.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole extended a greeting of welcome to visiting brethren and sisters, and that members of other conferences are invited to take part in our conference work and feel at home with us.

After remarks of the bishops, twenty ministers and ten deacons responded to the call of their names by wholesome words of admonition and encouragement, from which we gather the following thoughts: All seemed to be impressed with the importance of more active work. There are two kinds of workers, willing and unwilling. Which are we? Each one has a special work to do. If we are willing to work God will find and direct the work for us. Will power and faithfulness belongs to every willing worker. Nehemiah's work—no time for anything except the work they had in hand—so we should be in our service for the Master. The Holy Spirit is the greatest power in the work. Let us live more in the Spirit of love; instead of complaining about our Bishops, Ministers, Deacons, etc., let us encourage them in their work. The importance of home work and influence was emphasized. Be careful about conversation, literature and example given to children. Family worship should be found in every Christian home. The Sunday School is another great factor in the Master's work, and should be carefully guarded. We should ever hold up the standard of Christian living, and ever have an eye single to God's glory.

Forenoon session closed with song and prayer.

### Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened by singing hymn No. 381, "How beauteous are the feet," etc., also No. 380, "I love thy Kingdom, Lord," etc., and secret prayer, after which the moderator declared conference ready for business, and asked that a committee on resolutions be appointed by the bishops, who thereupon named Daniel Shenk, of Warwick County, Va., and Amos D. Wenger, of Millersville, Pa. Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that permission had heretofore been granted by conference to ordain a Deacon in the West Va. field, but that the ordination for certain good reasons has been hitherto delayed, but he now desires to have an ordination in the near future, and therefore asks this conference for a renewal of the permission heretofore granted. After some remarks, on motion by vote, said permission is renewed.

Brother Heatwole further stated that no definite arrangements have yet been made to supply the West Va. field with a minister for the present year; that an appointment had been made in the person of Brother Samuel Rhodes,

but that the possibilities of his going is simply waiting developments, and also that there is a plan contemplated by which a brother may be permanently stationed there after this year, to work in connection with Brother Smith, but for the want of more definite information as to the possible outcome, it is agreed to defer further action in the matter until tomorrow morning.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole stated on behalf of Brother Elam Horst that owing to some dissatisfaction in the congregation where he had been laboring he moved to Wolftrap, Va., and conference being presented with a letter and certificate showing that the matters of dissatisfaction have been adjusted by a committee, under the authority and to the satisfaction of his former bishop, and now this conference is asked to allow him to resume his ministerial work under the jurisdiction of this conference, which motion is granted.

**Question I**—Would this conference recommend following more closely the example of Jesus in John 13:4-5 in the words "and laid aside his garments" "and girded himself."

*Resolved*, That we believe that the method used by this conference in feet washing fully meets the requirements of our Savior, and that the example consists in washing one another's feet, not in the gird of the towel or laying aside of the garment.

Conference closed to meet tomorrow morning at 8:30 o'clock by prayer, the use of hymn 399 and the benediction.

#### Saturday Morning Session

Conference met Saturday morning at 8:30 o'clock and opened by singing hymn No. 75, "Lord give me light to do thy will," also No. 203, "Spirit so holy," etc., by the reading of the second chapter of Philippians by Bishop Lewis Shank and secret prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business and requested that the unfinished business of yesterday be first taken up. It develops that no definite arrangement for the West Virginia field for the summer has yet been made and will wait further developments.

It is now learned through our Home Mission Board that the prospects of stationing a brother in the West Va. field after this year is encouraging and hopeful, and it now rests with this conference for action in the matter; therefore be it

*Resolved*, That if no minister can be found who is willing to reside and labor, for an indefinite time, in the West Va. field of the Middle District, that a faithful brother who is willing be ordained to assist in that work by consent of the church.

**Question II**—Is it in harmony with the teaching of the Scriptures for a brother, acting as administrator, to sue at law?

*Resolved*, That we repeal any liberty heretofore granted to an executor or administrator to sue at law in settling up an estate, and that we consider it wrong to bring an unfriendly suit at law under any circumstances. See I Cor. 6:1 to 18, and Matt. 5:40.

The moderator announced the election of conference officers for two years now in order, and votes being taken for moderator and secretary resulted in the choice of Christian Good for moderator and C. H. Brunk for secretary; and votes being taken for an arranging committee, consisting of three members of conference, one from each district, resulted in the choice of Erasmus C. Shank, Upper District, Jos. F. Heatwole, Middle District, and Jos. W. Geil, Lower District.

While the election of conference officers was in progress the congregation sang hymn No. 187.

The financial report of the conference minute fund was read and approved.

The secretary's report of the proceedings of this conference being read, was ordered corrected and approved.

Bishop Shank stated that according to turn the next conference will be held at the Zion church in his district on the second Friday in October, being the ninth day of the month.

Conference closed with song, prayer and the benediction.

The following is a list of the members of conference present at this session, viz:

**Bishops:**—L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va., Box 2.—3.

**Ministers:**—E. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; J. H. Martin, Waynesboro, Va.; J. S. Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Jos. Shank, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; Jos. F. Heatwole, Dayton, Va.; Joseph W. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; C. Good, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Samuel H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; H. H. Good, South Boston, Va.; A. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; R. L. Smith, Rich Mountain, W. Va.; Joseph W. Coffman, Dayton, Va.; George B. Showalter, Broadway, Va.; Early Suter, Harrisonburg, Va.; J. E. Hartzler, East Lynne, Mo.; Daniel Shenk, Mohea, Warwick county, Va.; Etter Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va.; Amos D. Wenger, Millersville, Pa.—20.

**Deacons:**—S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; J. J. Wenger, Linville Depot, Va.; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va.; David S. Geil, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 7; Jacob W. Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Isaac Grove, Weyers Cave, Va.; Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va.; Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; H. L. Rhodes, Auburn, Fauquier Co., Va.; Timothy Wenger, Waynesboro, Va.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 33.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 9th AND 10th, 1908

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Zion Church, Lower District, on Friday, October 9, 1908, and opened at nine o'clock, a. m., by the use of hymn 377 and 299 from Church and Sunday School Hymnal. Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the 15th chapter of Romans which was followed by secret prayer.

C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

C. Good, the moderator, read the rules of conference, and conference being ready for business, Bishop J. D. Wert stated that Brother Isaac Eby has moved into his district and is now a co-laborer with them as deacon, and asks this conference to recognize his as such, and that he be enrolled as a member of this conference.

On motion the request is granted.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole stated that there has been an urgent request that another deacon be ordained in the West Virginia field, it being one of the last requests of our departed brother, J. F. Heatwole, who was well acquainted with the needs of that field, therefore he now asks that conference grant the privilege of ordaining a deacon there as soon as convenient.

On motion the privilege is granted.

The moderator asks that a committee on resolutions be appointed for this conference, whereupon the brethren, S. M. Burkholder and Fred Driver, were appointed.

Whereas, it has been our custom in conference, in times past, to call on the ministers for exhortation then the deacons; would not this conference advise that all be called upon in their order, without respect to their office?

On motion the suggested change is approved.

What is the attitude of this conference in regard to individual congregations opening mission stations without the co-operation or consent of its conference?

While waiting for a resolution the congregation sang hymn 30, "Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty," etc.

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this conference that personal mission work should be encouraged, but in case a mission station is to be established the consent of conference should first be obtained.

How may we better and more thoroughly work our field, especially the outside places?

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this body that it is the duty of the Bishops to appoint ministers and workers for special mission work wherever and whenever needed.

Afternoon session closed by prayer, song 78, "Wash me, O Lamb of God, wash me from sin," etc., and the benediction.

#### Saturday Morning Session

Moderator called meeting to order and announced hymn No. 276, "O Christ to Thee I Come," also hymn 278, "I owe the Lord a morning song," etc. Bishop J. D. Wert read nineteen verses of the fourth chapter of Philippians, and after some remarks, was followed by secret prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business, whereupon the following questions were presented for consideration.

How would this conference advise the trustees of our meeting houses, in extending liberty to ministers of other denominations as to their use for themselves as places of worship?

*Resolved*, That it is the desire of this conference to exercise consistent charity towards ministers of other denominations; but our experience has taught us that our trustees should not open our houses to others for the purpose of holding regular meetings, continued meetings, or for preaching doctrines contrary to that which we believe, and even ignore the doctrines we profess and teach.

**Question**—What steps would this conference advise to be taken to suppress the tendency of members to drift into worldliness?

*Resolved*, That we become more diligent in carrying out the decisions of former conferences in holding instruction meetings, and making annual visits, and getting in close touch with each other, talking more about the evil of worldliness and the blessedness of living consistent, humble, consecrated Christian lives, we ourselves being ensamples to the flock.

Closed with prayer, song No. 103 and the benediction.

A. B. Burkholder was appointed to fill the unexpired term of Jos. F. Heat-

\*Preacher Jos. F. Heatwole died September 30th, previous to the meeting of this conference. His personal presence and familiar voice were sadly missed.

wole,\* deceased, as a member of the arranging committee for Middle District.

The time and place for holding the next conference is Springdale, Upper District, on the second Friday in May, being May 14, 1909.

The financial report and conference minutes being read and approved, conference adjourned with prayer, song No. 103 and the benediction, to be followed by an afternoon preparatory, baptismal and ordination service.

The following is a list of the members of conference present at this session, viz:

**Bishops:**—L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va.; J. Wert, Hearing, Va.—4.

**\*Ministers:**—E. Shank, J. H. Martin, Etter Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Jos. Shank, R. F. D. No. 16, Joseph W. Geil, R. F. D. No. 16, George B. Showalter, Broadway, Va.; J. S. Martin, R. F. D. No. 5, C. Good, R. F. D. No. 5, Samuel H. Rhodes, R. F. D. No. 4, A. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Joseph W. Coffman, Dayton, Va.; Elam Horst, Wolftrap, Va.; Jacob A. Heatwole, \_\_\_\_\_, Colo.—15.

**Deacons:**—S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; J. J. Wenger, Linville Depot, Va.; Elias Brunk, David S. Geil, R. F. D. No. 7, Jacob W. Showalter, R. F. D. No. 5, Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va.; Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; Christian Eversole, \_\_\_\_\_, Va.; Jacob Geil, Edom, Va.; Christian Shank, Singers Glen, Va.—10.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 29.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 14th AND 15th, 1909

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Spring Dale Church, Upper District, May 14th, 1909, and opened at nine o'clock a. m. by the singing of hymns 377 and 114. In the absence of the Secretary, S. M. Burkholder was chosen Secretary, Pro Tem. Bishop L. J. Heatwole read the 71st Psalm, which was followed by secret prayer.

Christian Good, the moderator, then read the rules of conference.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole extended an invitation to all ministers and deacons present to take part in the conference exercises.

Brother Isaac Eby said they held their council meetings in Norfolk county, Va. Peace and union were unanimously expressed. He said they now had in their colony 38 members and seven applicants for baptism.

Brother I. D. Hertzler, of Warwick county, Va., said they held their council meetings and peace and union were almost wholly expressed. They had at present one applicant for baptism.

Brother Elam Horst, of Halifax County, Va., said they held their council meetings. Peace was unanimously expressed. They received since last conference nine members by letter, eight by baptism and have a total membership of 34.

The Brethren, Jos. Wert and Timothy Wenger, of Norfolk, Va., H. L. Rhodes and E. J. Berkey, of Fauquier, Va., and Henry Keener, Robert Smith and Osborne Wyatt, of West Virginia, all members of this conference, sent greetings of love and good will.

The following are some of the remarks made by ministers and deacons:

\*Preacher Henry H. Good died suddenly at his home in Halifax Co., Va., on the 10th of October, the date on which the second day's session of this conference was held.

Preacher Jacob R. Hildebrand died on December 6th, following this conference, at the ripe age of 89 years, 2 months and 10 days.

We are making a record that will stand for or against us.

As we are entrusted with the Gospel, let us speak not as pleasing men, but as pleasing God.

It is our individual duty to labor in our special calling.

We have all had bitter experiences by not following the examples of those who have gone before us.

Our chief joy should be to know that our names are written in the book of life.

If I have ever felt the power of prayer it has been since our last conference.

If we wish to retain a high standard in the church we (the leaders) must be true and faithful.

It does not depend so much on what we wish to do, but what we do for the Lord Jesus.

After sixteen ministers and seven deacons had spoken, Conference adjourned for dinner, after engaging in secret prayer and singing Hymn No. 52.

Afternoon session opened at 1:15 o'clock with singing Hymn No. 123. Bishop Lewis Shank read the third chapter of Ephesians, which was followed with secret prayer. The moderator then declared the Conference ready for business.

J. S. Martin and Fred Driver were appointed a committee on resolutions.

**Question I**—Bishop Lewis Shank asked permission of conference to ordain one or two ministers in their mountain territory. Granted.

**Question II**—What is the difference, if any, between members who, on account of transgressions are kept from communion, and such as have been expelled or published as being no longer members.

*Resolved*, There is a difference. The first is unfinished work, the last is finished.

**Question III**—Elam Horst, of Halifax County, Va., asked the privilege of ordaining a minister and deacon in their congregation. The privilege was granted.

**Question IV**—What way or ways will this conference devise to build up our weak and unattended places of worship.

*Resolved*, That we answer this question with the second resolution of our last conference. It is the sense of this body that it is the duty of the bishops to appoint ministers and workers for special mission work wherever and whenever needed.

Afternoon session closed with prayer, singing hymn No. 62 and benediction.

### Second Day

Saturday morning conference opened at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymns No. 277 and 278, the reading of the fourth chapter of First Corinthians and prayer. The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

**Question V**—How often should the Holy Kiss or Kiss of Charity be observed as commanded by the apostles Paul and Peter.

As God's word enjoins the observation of the Holy Kiss among brethren without specifying the time, when and how often it should be observed, we should do it whenever and wherever practicable to apply its meaning.

**Question VI**—As our Church publications now belong to the Church and

are managed by the Publication Board, should not this conference appoint a brother as a member of said Board to represent the Virginia Conference.

*Resolved*, That this conference elect a member on the Publication Board. Bishop L. J. Heatwole was elected.

**Question VII**—The Warwick-Norfolk congregations asked that conference be held in their district occasionally. The request was granted.

The next conference will be held at the Bank Church, Middle District, October 8th and 9th, 1909.

The minutes of the present conference were then read and accepted, after which conference adjourned with prayer and singing hymn No. 1.

The following is a list of members attending this conference and their addresses:

**Bishops**—A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va.—3.

**\*Ministers**—E. C. Shank, Etter Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Perry E. Shank, Jos. Shank, Jos. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; George B. Showalter, Broadway, Va.; A. B. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Samuel H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; J. Early Suter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; C. Good, J. S. Martin, Dayton, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Jos. W. Coffman, Dayton, Va., R. F. D. No. 1; Elam Horst, Wolftrap, Va.; I. D. Hertzler, Denbigh, Va.; Daniel Stump, Hanover, Pa.—16.

**Deacons**—Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; Isaac Groves, Weyers Cave, Va.; Elias Brunk, Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Isaac Eby, Fentress, Va.; Christian Ebersole, Strasburg, Va.; S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 26.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR OCTOBER 8th AND 9th, 1909

Pursuant to announcement, the Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Bank Church, Middle District, on the 8th day of October, 1909, and opened at nine o'clock, a. m. by singing hymns 377 and 372 from Church and Sunday School Hymnal, the reading of the fourth chapter of Ephesians by Bishop A. P. Heatwole and secret prayer.

The rules of conference were read by the moderator, Christian Good.

C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

Conference was now addressed, first by the bishops present in the following order: A. P. Heatwole, Lewis Shank, L. J. Heatwole and Benjamin Weaver and then by ministers and deacons present as their names were called by Brother Fred Driver. In these addresses the theme spoken upon chiefly, was the importance of conference work—the need of more activity in the Christian life. The fact was emphasized that the essential principal of Christian work is LOVE, love to God and love to our fellow man.

The remarkable love, faith, courage and endurance of Nehemiah, in the face of discouragements, trials and difficulties in rebuilding the walls of the temple at Jerusalem was presented as an object lesson to us when subjected to trials and discouragements in our Christian work of today. The throwing

\*Preacher Jacob Martin died at his home near Springdale Church in Augusta County, Virginia, ten days before the conference assembled at that place. His departure caused a vacancy that was painfully felt during the session of this conference.

down of the walls of the temple was represented as an emblem of sin, and before Nehemiah could again rebuild these walls, much preparation was necessary, much rubbish to be cleared away, efficient help to be enlisted, and some definite plan as to how best overcome the difficulties they would encounter.

Nehemiah trusted God to prosper the work, and he knew with God on his side the work could not fail. God's help is a sure guarantee against failure in all faithful efforts in battling against sin and opposition.

We are living in an age of trials and temptations, but if we, like Nehemiah and his associates, have a mind to work, the broken down walls by sin may again be restored. Nehemiah encouraged and pushed the work, though it was necessary to have trowel and sword in hand at the same time.

The fact that man was lost in sin and found again in Christ should forever be a source of gratitude on our part. It makes our life important, not from a selfish view for our own sakes only, but for the good we may be to others, for being saved ourselves we may be the means of saving others.

One of the secrets of Christian strength is to keep our eyes constantly on Jesus. Peter, seeing Jesus, felt strong enough to come to him on the waters, but turning his eyes he looked with fright upon the billows and by it lost sight of Jesus and came near sinking.

We should set our mark high in our ideal of the Christian life, and strive to attain to it.

Forbearance is sometimes a virtue. By contending too strongly to have things our way we may hinder or destroy much good. We have all we can do to strive against sin without striving against each other.

This conference is primarily a Virginia conference, but we are a representative body, and seeing before us faces from Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Virginia, we feel that the occasion is magnified and trust we will be together in mutual love and fellowship. We feel to express a hearty welcome to all. We feel to quote Paul's language in his second epistle to the Philippians where he says "fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves."

#### Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened by using hymn 352, "There's No Friend Like the Lowly Jesus, etc.," also hymn 101, "Any Where My Savior Leads, etc.," the reading of the 23th Psalm by Bishop L. J. Heatwole and prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business and asked that a committee on resolutions be appointed, whereupon the bishops appointed the brethren S. M. Burkholder and Fred Driver as such committee for the present conference.

The moderator asked the bishops to present any matters they may have for consideration at this time, whereupon Bishop L. J. Heatwole asked which is most in gospel order at Communion, to take one piece or a quantity of bread in hand, while invoking the blessing before distributing the same? Scriptural quotations were made—opinions expressed in the light of the Scriptures, and the consensus of opinion, as expressed, was that it should be left optional with the one who invokes the blessing.

**Question I**—Would not this conference think it expedient to strike off from the rules of conference the latter clause of Section 6? On motion it is

resolved that Conference Rules be amended by striking out from Section 6 the words, "if there be no objections."

**Question II**—Would conference favor being in session longer, allowing for a conference sermon, and the discussion of more Scriptural subjects.

Awaiting a resolution conference sang hymn 141, "There is a Land of Pure Delight, etc."

*Resolved*, That the sessions of conference be confined to the time now used and as much of that time given to direct Scriptural discussions as possible.

**Question III**—Would not this conference advise that teachers in Sunday-School be reminded by the superintendent to avoid speaking in a tone that is louder than necessary for their own classes to hear them distinctly.

*Resolved*, That it is advisable.

**An application.**—The Warwick river congregation asks that the next session of Conference be held in their church house in Warwick county.

*Resolved*, That the next conference be held at the Warwick river church house, on Friday, May 13th, being the second Friday in May, 1910.

**Question IV**—In the amendment of Section 6 of the rules of this conference would this conference advise that a given majority rule, unless deemed advisable other wise especially important questions only as needs may require. Question continued until tomorrow.

Preaching announced for the evening.

On motion conference adjourned by prayer, song and the benediction.

### Saturday Morning Session

Saturday morning session opened at 8:30 o'clock by singing hymns Nos. 234 and 250, followed by the reading of the first chapter of I Peter by Bishop Benjamin Weaver and silent prayer.

The moderator declared conference ready for business.

The bishop having nothing to present for consideration at this time, and the question continued from yesterday having been withdrawn by the author, the following question was presented:

**Question V**—What would this conference advise as being the best means of reviving and increasing the interest in our Sunday School and young people's meetings. This conference would advise that the ministers and teachers should allow themselves to be more spirit filled, converse more about spiritual things in the presence of the children and young people and that they and the parents of the children be more punctual in attending these meetings and seeing that their children are there, and on good time, and that they conduct themselves in a proper manner, encouraging them when they do well, and kindly reproving in the spirit of meekness when they are careless and tardy. Rev. 22:6; Ephesians 6:4.

Brother D. F. Driver here gave a talk outlining the ideas, object and workings of the General Conference, which was followed by D. H. Coffman on the same subject.

By request hymn 322 was sung, "Tis Hard to Bear the Heavy Load, etc."

The business portion of conference being over, the 19th and 21st verses of the third chapter of 1st Peter were read as a topic for consideration, and after an exchange of various useful thoughts, the 18th verse of the 18th chapter of Matthew was also read and commented upon, apparently to the interest and profit of all present.

The minutes of conference being read, a closing address was made by Bishop Benjamin Weaver, in which he extended a greeting of love and good will to the brotherhood from his home congregation.

Conference closed with a benediction.

The following is a list of members attending this conference and their addresses:

**Bishops:**—Benj. Weaver, Spring Grove, Pa.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va.—4.

**Ministers:**—E. C. Shank, Etter Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Perry E. Shank, Jos. Shank, Jos. Geil, Broadway, Va., R. F. D. No. 16; George B. Showalter, Broadway, Va.; A. B. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; Samuel H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; J. Early Suter, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 4; C. Good, J. S. Martin, Dayton, Va., R. F. D. No. 2; Jos. W. Coffman, Dayton, Va., R. F. D. No. 1; Elam Horst, Wolftrap, Va.; Daniel F. Driver, Versailles, Mo.; Henry Keener, Job, W. Va.; Robert Smith, Rich Mountain, W. Va.—17.

**Deacons:**—Fred Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va., R. F. D. No. 5; Christian Ebersole, Strasburg, Va.; S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Timothy Wenger, Fentress, Va.; Daniel H. Coffman, Goshen, Ind.; Robert Henderson, Sharando, Va.—7.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 28.

#### CONFERENCE MINUTES FOR MAY 13th AND 14th, 1910

The Semi-Annual Conference of Virginia met at the Warwick River Church in Warwick County, Va., May 13th, 1910.

Conference opened at nine o'clock by singing hymn No. 377. In the absence of the secretary, S. M. Burkholder was elected secretary pro tem. Bishop A. P. Heatwole read the first chapter of Philippians, which was followed by silent prayer.

The moderator then read the rules of conference.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole spoke in part as follows:

We greet you all in the name of our Lord and Master who hath wrought justification, sanctification and redemption through which we are enabled to take a hopeful view of life. When we meet in a conference capacity, we are always gladdened in our hearts for the association it brings unto us. We then have time to ponder over the deliberations of the past conferences and rejoice in the advent of the future conferences. In all the history of our conference for 75 years there has not been one held outside of the valley of Virginia.

The demand for earnest work is increasing rapidly, and it is for this conference to meet the conditions the work brings upon us. The conference has a right to command rules for the regulation of the church. Each measure presented should be considered in a righteous and godly spirit. I feel to give part of the time allotted to me to others.—We have held our council meetings and also made a general visit, in which nearly all of our members were seen, and the results were gratifying and encouraging. Meetings have been held with good results along the border lines. Seventy two members were received by baptism, five by confession, fifteen moved in, making a gain of 92. Loss by death, seven; withdrawn, six; moved out, ten; total loss, 23. Net gain, 69. Present membership, 581, and 12 applicants at present.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole then spoke in part as follows:

We can also say we are glad that we have been spared to this conference season. We can see how gracious God has been to us. Our desire is to talk in a way that we may all be encouraged and built up. We desire that God's presence and Spirit should be with us. I have been thinking of the great calling Christ gave to His disciples. When He appeared on the shores of Galilee, and called some of the fishermen to become fishers of men, how willing they were to follow Him. When He met His disciples on the ship and told them where to cast the net, they were ready to follow His directions and they had a wonderful catch by being obedient. Christ taught the disciples whom He called to do the work of apostles. As He called the disciples He calls us. Have we been willing to follow Him courageously and fearlessly, or have we been trembling with fear on account of the trials, difficulties and dangers which threaten us? Many people do not like to hear sound doctrine, but we should not fear to present the truth, which will make us free. When Peter trusted in his own strength, he did not know himself. Though he promised to defend his Master in the trying hour, he failed. The Lord knew what would happen and when He cast His eye on him it caused him to weep bitterly. His experience did him good. The Lord accepted him again. I fear we sometimes go fishing, and catch nothing because we go in our own strength and the Lord is not with us. Let us cast the net as the Lord directs and we will be successful. Christ after his resurrection prepared a meal for His disciples and told them to come and dine. He has also prepared a meal for us and calls us to come and dine. Peter denied his Lord three times and again confessed Him three times. Then the Lord told him to feed His sheep, and lambs. If we have the love for Christ Peter had, nothing will be too hard for us to do for His sake.—Our council meetings have been held. Peace and a desire to commune was unanimously expressed.

Bishop Lewis Shank said:

We are glad for the Word our heavenly Father has given us through which we may be enabled to express a oneness in our Lord. There is a scripture now comes to my mind, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this world." This scripture is applicable to all and more especially to those who are ministers and leaders in the church. No one can go fast when he is entangled either temporally or spiritually. We should not suffer the things of the world to entangle us and cause us to come short of our duty. Let nothing cause us to neglect the things which will please our heavenly Father. We notice in the fishermen of Galilee a readiness to follow Christ. Sometimes much is lost to us by not being ready to follow where He would have us go. We all need each other's prayers. Let us not forget one another at the throne of grace.—In our council meetings peace and a desire to commune has been fully expressed.

Bishop Jos. Wert then spoke:

Greeting of love to all. With the Psalmist we can say, "The Lord has done great things for us, whereof we are glad." We have great reason to be glad that we can again meet in conference. Hope God will give grace for the occasion. We should be workers together with Him. The people in the different epochs of the world oftentimes forgot God and wandered far away from Him, but He was always ready to receive them when they returned. Since our request has been granted to have conference here, and have the brethren and sisters with us, we have been pleased to think of the time when we could behold the faces of many and become workers together. We then ascribe all to the goodness of God who will bless our efforts for the good of the church. We are glad to know that, when we fail, God is willing to forgive. We feel

that it is the love of Christ that constrained you to come into our midst to hold this conference. Then let us be workers together and labor to bring about the oneness which has been spoken of by the brethren. Let us all have the same mind, that is the mind of Christ. When we are called to go where there are only a few members, let us not hesitate to go. Let us work together with Christ the Head. When we are called to go through the deep waters He will be with us. Let us be willing to make the sacrifices necessary to do the Lord's work. Satan works in different ways and forms, in different places. Let us stand on the true foundation which can not be moved. All should labor in their respective spheres. Much spurious and wrong doctrine has been brought to bear on the minds of the people. Special effort is needed to meet and refute such doctrine with the Word.—Our council meetings were held. Peace and a desire to commune were expressed. Two have been received into the church by baptism. Twenty-one moved in. Lost one by death. We have a membership of 63 with 11 applicants.

Bishop George R. Brunk spoke in part as follows:

I am glad to meet with all that are here. Nothing gives me more pleasure than being in assemblies whose object is to labor for the Lord. I am glad for the hearty welcome that we have received from the church here. We want to increase in quantity, and not lose in quality. The command to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature is good, but we are also bidden to "teach them to observe all things which I have commanded you," which is just as good, but not near so much spoken of. At present there is much talk of the uniting of all different creeds into one body. I fear this will bring about direful results. "He that doeth the will of my father the same is my brother," etc. "Take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine." Two things are necessary. Along with the spreading of the work, let us teach all things. The simplicity of the Gospel should be held up especially. We should do all we can for unity, but should be careful not to give up the teaching of the Gospel of Christ, nor any of the teachings of the Bible. It is not charity to give up the doctrine of God, to compromise with the devil. It is necessary to be right with God in the heart. We may measure up with the teaching of the Bible in appearance and in our hearts be far from God. We can easily "have a form of godliness, and deny the power thereof." Job was a perfect man. He lived up to the light he had, having good motives, and his face toward God but yet he had not fully learned the weakness of man or the greatness of God. He thought too much of himself. May God help us along these lines. Take heed to thyself. God has given us the gifts and requires of us to exercise the gifts given us. Three things are especially needful, humility, unselfishness, and zeal. If we have these things we can please God.—Our council meetings were held. Peace and a desire to commune were expressed with one exception.

Hymn No. 355 was then sung after which the ministers and deacons spoke in turn.

Brother Henry Keener stated that the work in West Virginia is progressing slowly. Twelve members were added to the church last year. He said Brother Smith sends greeting of love and good will to this conference.

Brother Gabriel Brunk reported the work in Halifax county as progressing nicely. They now have 50 members. He said the brethren Horst and Coffman sent greeting of love to this conference.

Some other thoughts presented were:

The Gospel is for all the world, not only for Mennonite children.

If we would have been able to hold our children, we would have great numbers in the church today that we have not.

The power of the church lies in unity with God.

We feel not far from home among the brotherhood here.

We want to be at home here. We want to be at home over yonder.

We should hold up the whole Gospel if ever we are with those who only accept part or none of it.

The Gospel we uphold and work for should make us the hardest working church on the face of the earth.

We should not be strangers here. We should reach out and let ourselves be known. I do not think any of us are fully satisfied here, but we shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness.

We should thank God for the great privilege of preaching the Gospel of peace.

After five bishops, thirteen ministers and nine deacons had spoken, conference adjourned with silent prayer and singing hymn No. 357.

#### Friday Afternoon Session

The afternoon session opened at 1:30 p. m. with singing hymn No. 200, followed by reading a part of the eighth chapter of Romans, by Bishop. L. J. Heatwole, and silent prayer. The moderator then declared conference ready for business.

A. D. Wenger and Daniel Shank were apointed a committee on resolutions.

The bishops were accorded the privilege of presenting any business they had for conference.

Bishop A. P. Heatwole presented a petition from the church of Concord, Tenn. asking to be admitted into the Virginia Conference.

*Resolved*, That we welcome the little flock of members at Concord, Tenn., into our conference, providing that a majority of two thirds of the members are in favor of it, and they are willing to comply with the regulations of this conference.

**Question I**—To what extent can our members consistently hold worldly offices?

In the light of the scripture, Rom. 13:4, "He is the minister of God to thee for good," compared with the scripture, "My kingdom is not of this world," John 18:36.

*Resolved*, That we cannot serve in any office where duties cannot be discharged without violating some form of Gospel principles, such as administering the oath, using force, or being unequally yoked together with unbelievers, etc.

**Question II**—Is it in full accord with Gospel teaching, and consistent with the rules and regulations of the church, for such of its members who are really the Lord's poor, to become inmates of the county alms-house?

*Resolved*, That while there might be exceptions, yet in general we strongly recommend that the church provide for her own poor.

Conference then adjourned with silent prayer and singing hymn No. 241.

#### Saturday Morning Session

Conference opened Saturday morning at 8:30 a. m. with singing hymn No. 76, followed by the reading of part of the third chapter of Colossians by Lewis.

Shank and silent prayer. The moderator declared conference ready for business.

Bishop L. J. Heatwole asked permission to ordain one or two ministers in the Middle District.

The request was granted.

Bishop Jos. Wert asked that Bishop Geo. R. Brunk be accepted by the Virginia conference as a bishop and member of conference, and placed in charge of the Warwick River congregation.

The request was granted.

**Question III**—What is the mind of this conference in regard to the religious observance of Christmas, Good Friday and Ascension Day?

*Resolved*, That it is the mind of this conference to observe Christmas, Good Friday and Ascension Day, by holding divine services, but not to make it obligatory.

**Question IV**—What is the sentiment of this conference in regard to an annual Sunday school conference for this conference district?

*Resolved*, That this conference favors the holding of local Sunday school conference and gives permission to hold such conferences in connection with the regular church conference when desired by the local district in which the church conference is held.

**Question V**—Would it not be well to have our conference minutes printed in pamphlet form suitable for general distribution in the brotherhood?

*Resolved*, That the minutes of the Virginia conference from the date of 1835 to the present date be put in pamphlet form for general distribution among the brotherhood and that a committee be appointed to attend to the publication of the same.

**Question VI**—As there are now more bishop districts in the Virginia conference, should not the Warwick River congregation and the Norfolk congregation each be entitled to a representative in the committee on arrangements?

*Resolved*, That they should.

The term of the conference officers, etc., having expired, the following were elected to serve for the next two years:

C. Good, Moderator. C. H. Brunk, Secretary.

**Arranging Committee**.—Daniel Shank, Warwick River District; A. D. Wenger, Norfolk District; Erasmus C. Shank, Upper District; A. B. Burkholder, Middle District, and Jos. W. Geil, Lower District.

P. S. Hartman was elected member of the General Board of Missions and Charities.

L. J. Heatwole, C. Good and C. H. Brunk were elected a committee to arrange for and have printed, conference minutes, as provided for under question five of this conference.

The place of meeting for the Fall conference will be at Zion Church, Lower District, on October 14 and 15, 1910.

The minutes of the present conference being read and approved, conference adjourned with prayer, song and the benediction.

The following members of conference were in attendance.

**Bishops**:—Joseph Wert, Fentress, Va.; A. P. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va.; L. J. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; Lewis Shank, Broadway, Va.; Geo. R. Brunk, Denbigh, Va.—5.

**Ministers:**—A. D. Wenger, Fentress, Va.; E. C. Shank, Waynesboro, Va.; A. B. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jos. W. Geil, Broadway, Va.; H. B. Keener, Job, W. Va.; S. H. Rhodes, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jos. W. Coffman, Dayton, Va.; Perry E. Shank, Broadway, Va.; Gabriel Brunk, Wolftrap, Va.; Jos. Shank, Broadway, Va.; I. D. Hartzler, Denbigh, Va.; Daniel Shank, Denbigh, Va.; C. Good, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jacob Hahn, Mohea, Va.—14.

**Deacons:**—A. P. Shank, Mohea, Va.; Henry Blosser, Harrisonburg, Va.; Isaac Eby, Fentress, Va.; G. W. Henderson, Sherando, Va.; T. J. Wenger, Fentress, Va.; Elias Brunk, Harrisonburg, Va.; Christian Ebersole, Riverton, Va.; Jacob W. Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va.; S. M. Burkholder, Dale Enterprise.—9.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 28.

Members who were absent from this conference:

**Bishops:**—0.

**Ministers:**—Jacob Teats, W. Va.; Daniel Mellinger, Winchester, Va.; Robert L. Smith, Rich Mountain, W. Va.; Peter S. Heatwole, Dale Enterprise, Va.; J. Snively Martin, Dayton, Va.; J. Early Suter, Harrisonburg, Va.; Etter F. Heatwole, Waynesboro, Va.; Sem S. Weaver, Mt. Clinton, Va.; George Showalter, Broadway, Va.; Edw. J. Berkey, Auburn, Va.; Elam Horst, Wolftrap, Va.—11.

**Deacons:**—Faro Wilkins, W. Va.; Osborne Wyat, Rich Mountain, W. Va.; French H. White, Job, W. Va.; David S. Geil, Linville, Va.; Jacob Geil, Linville, Va.; Christian Shank, Singers Glen, Va.; John J. Wenger, Linville, Va.; Henry L. Rhodes, Auburn, Va.; Isaac Grove, Cave Station, Va.; Fred A. Driver, Waynesboro, Va.; Eli Kauffman, Wolftrap, Va.; Benjamin Brenneman, Mohea, Va.; Clayton Bergey, Fentress, Va.—13.

Total number of Bishops, Ministers and Deacons 24.

For all members of conference—Grand Total—52.

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